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JANUARY 14, 2008

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NEW FROM HOOVER PRESS

Turning Points in Ending the Cold War

EDITED BY KIRON K. SKINNER

Twenty years ago, in the early 1980s, no one could have imagined that only a decade later the cold war would be over. How did it happen? The essays in this collection offer illuminating insights into the key players–Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, and others–and the monumental events that led to the collapse of communism.

The expert contributors examine the end of détente and the beginning of the new phase of the cold war in the early 1980s, Reagan's radical new strategies aimed at changing Soviet behavior, the peaceful democratic revolutions in Poland and Hungary, the events that brought about the reunification of Germany, the role of events in Third World countries, the critical contributions of Gorbachev and Yeltsin, and more.

Kiron K. Skinner, is an associate professor of international relations at Carnegie Mellon University and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. She is a coauthor of the *New York Times* bestsellers, *Reagan, in His Own Hand: The Writings of Ronald Reagan that Reveal His Revolutionary Vision of America* (with Annelise Anderson and Martin Anderson, 2001) and *Reagan, a Life in Letters* (with Annelise Anderson and Martin Anderson, 2003).

Contributors: Alexei Arbatov, Karen Brutents, Anatoli Chernaiev, Oleg Grinevsky, David Holloway, Robert L. Hutchings, Jack F. Matlock Jr., Michael McFaul, Georgi I. Mirski, Pavel Palazhchenko, Nikolai Petrov, Condoleezza Rice, Peter W. Rodman, George P. Shultz, Philip Zelikow, Vladislav Zubok.

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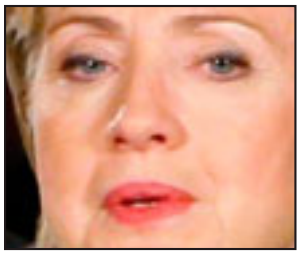

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the weekly Standard

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

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A Lurid New Year

The Scrapbook enjoyed a pleasant New Year's at home, thank you. No Times Square revelry, no First Night celebration, no sparklers or twirling noisemakers, not even champagne, just a quiet evening, and modest observance, chez Scrapbook.

Some time before midnight we remembered that it might be a good idea to switch on the television set and watch the lighted ball creep down the pole in New York City. It's an old tradition in the Scrapbook household, which has happy memories of sitting in front of the Zenith and tuning in to Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians playing "Boo Hoo" ("You've got me crying for you / Boo Hoo . . . ") and "Auld Lang Syne" at the stroke of midnight, from the Hotel Roosevelt ballroom.

Is The Scrapbook showing its age, or what?

While channel surfing in search of that lighted ball, however, The Scrapbook made a horrifying discovery. To be sure, Guy Lombardo died in 1977, and we shall never see his like again. But for those of us in Television Land who like to welcome the new year to the sound of, say, tenor saxophones, and not a punk band or the latest hip hop sensation, there wasn't much variety to be found around the dial.

On ABC, of course, there was *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve 2008* with his cohosts Fergie and Ryan Seacrest of *American Idol* fame. Between occasional excruciating pronouncements from Mr. Clark—who, since his 2004 stroke, looks and sounds like the animatronic Dick Clark at an amusement park—Ryan and Fergie performed from Hollywood with the likes of Akon, Miley Cyrus, Plain White T's, and will.i.am. On the Fox network you could catch the voluptuous Cat Deeley presenting "music group Lifehouse" and "late-night talk show host Spike Feresten," and on NBC there was *New Year's Eve with Carson Daly* featuring the sounds of Alicia Keys and Lenny Kravitz.

CNN had the bright idea of inviting anchorman Anderson Cooper and comedienne Kathy Griffin into our living rooms to salute the passing year, and Comcast Cable offered Foreigner (that's a rock band) and "a live special from Florida hosted by E's Todd Newton." ESPN treated its sporting East Coast audience to daredevil Robbie "Maddo" Maddison, who at midnight attempted a world-record motorcycle jump in Las Vegas, and three hours later West Coast viewers caught Rhys Millen attempting "an unprecedented truck flip from the same Vegas location." Needless to say, MTV's *Tila Tequila's New Year's Eve Masquerade 2008* was an unrelenting siege of Mary J. Blige, Kid Rock, Fabolous, Paramore, Good Charlotte, Wyclef, Boys Like Girls, and Flor Rida.

We kept flipping the dial, and no matter where we turned, it seemed the same bass guitarists were madly thumping their Peveys while thong-clad dancers bounced up and down. It was loud, lively, lurid entertainment, but not quite what The Scrapbook craved in the comfort of its darkened parlor.

It occurred to us that the subtle minds in network television must have concluded that when Guy Lombardo died his audience died with him, and that no one in America has grown older in the intervening decades. As usual, New Year's Eve programming was exclusively directed at a very young, very circumscribed, audience—few of whom, The Scrapbook suspects, were actually at home, sitting in their armchairs, nursing a whiskey-and-soda, awaiting midnight.

And as usual, once the lighted ball descended and "2008" was illuminated, The Scrapbook glanced briefly at "late-night talk show host Spike Feresten," that motorcycle jump in Vegas, and Kid Rock, and switched off the television set with relief. ♦

Saint Barack (cont.)

"Obama's finest speeches do not excite. They do not inform. They don't even really inspire. They *elevate*. They enmesh you in a grander moment, as if history has stopped flowing passively by, and, just for an instant, contracted around you, made you aware of its presence, and your role in it. He is not the Word made flesh, but the triumph of word *over* flesh, over color, over despair. The other great leaders I've heard guide us towards a better politics, but Obama is, at his best, able to call us back to our highest selves, to the place where America exists as a glittering ideal, and where we, its honored inhabitants, seem capable of achieving it, and thus of sharing in its meaning and transcendence."

(Ezra Klein, blogging for The American Prospect, *Jan. 3)* ♦

Flashman, RIP

We note with sorrow the death, at age 82, of George MacDonald Fraser, Scottish journalist-turned-novelist, brave veteran of the Burma campaign in World War II, unreconstructed conservative, and author of the dozen "Flashman" novels, published between 1969 and two years ago.

For those not yet initiated into the fraternity of Fraser readers, the first in

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(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of August 2, 1999)

the Flashman series was entitled *Flashman: From the Flashman Papers, 1839-1842*, the lost journal of a mid-Victorian soldier of fortune which Fraser claimed to have discovered at a household sale. Of course, Sir Harry Flashman—hero, coward, gallant, rogue—was entirely Fraser's inspiration, and the most entertaining company imaginable in the high tide of the British Empire.

Like the devotees of Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin novels, Flashman partisans are a notably diverse lot, with a common appreciation for low comedy and high adventure. Among them may be found our friend and contributing editor Max Boot, who wrote last week in the *Contentions* blog on the *Commentary* website that

> Fraser's books gallop along at the pace of a runaway mustang, with incident piled atop incident to keep the reader's attention, many of them violent or salacious. There is also a humorous, mocking tone to Fraser's work, a bit reminiscent of Thackeray, which contrasts with the somewhat dour mood of the Aubrey/Maturin books. . . . [Fraser] was no less meticulous in his reconstructions of the past. A reader interested in Victorian history could do a lot worse than to pick up the Flashman series, which contained . . . descriptions of conflicts ranging from the U.S. Civil War to the First Afghan War. Flashman was a Victorian Zelig or Forrest Gump who showed up conveniently enough at every important event between 1840 and 1900. . . . If there is a modern writer with a better ear for Victorian slang, I have yet to read his or her work. ♦

Portrait of the Artist

Perhaps you've been wondering what our good friend and longtime cartoonist for this page, Peter Steiner, has been up to. He has been quite busy, as it turns out, working on a series of paintings (acrylic on canvas), which are now on exhibit at the Hotchkiss School's Tremaine Gallery in Lakeville, Connecticut, until February 2.

"I think of this as an exhibition of three large works," writes Steiner. "I am also a writer of novels. I do a series of paintings, then I write a novel, then I paint another series, then I write a novel. That is how I like to work because the two enterprises use entirely different parts of my brain and require a major shift in my entire mentality. They do, however, have this one thing in common: When I start writing or painting, I do not have the slightest idea of where I will end up."

But now we all know: Steiner's second novel is due out in the spring. In the meantime, be sure to check out "Portraits & Self-Portraits" (www.hotchkiss.org/arts). ♦

Thank Goodness for the Experts

From the *New York Times*, January 4, 2007: "Now that the price of crude oil has crossed the $100-a-barrel threshold, and then retreated slightly, what direction will it take now? Many experts say it will go up, then down, and then maybe up again." ♦

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Casual

College Daze

It began with a trickle. That's why I didn't notice anything at first.

"Who's going to Kent College?" I asked innocently enough, fingering the brochure that arrived in the mail one day. There was, of course, no answer, since no one in the house had ever heard of Kent College, much less expressed an interest in it.

"Occidental College?" I called out the next day, when the mail fell through the slot. "Who in his right mind would go to an overpriced money trap like Occidental College?"

It was a rhetorical question, as I'll explain in a moment, and it too was met with silence. On the third day there were two envelopes, also from schools I hadn't heard of, and then four the next day, and the next. Within a month more than a hundred promotional brochures had been stuffed through the mail slot, bursting with color photos of cheerful undergraduates and printed on paper as thick and voluptuous as the leaves of a rubber plant. All of them were addressed to my 16-year-old son. The boy was being solicited, as surely and shamelessly as a sailor on the docks.

I've now come to realize that this windfall is only the first sign of college madness—a relatively new disease that has grabbed middle-aged American parents by their wattles and ear-hair and shows no signs of letting go. The disease can strike you unawares, as it has me, or the parent can become an active participant, goosing the madness along.

I think of an acquaintance, for instance, who asked me not long ago how our "college tour" was going. She saw my puzzled look and explained. The college tour is a symptom of the disease in its advanced stage: an elaborate, expensive series of visits to college campuses, where student sherpas lead herds of potential applicants and their parents from one green quadrangle to another, in and out of classroom buildings and through the lobbies of dormitories, imparting information about the marvelous variety of dining hall food, the wonders of school nightlife, the easy access to reproductive health services, the limitless potential of lacrosse, football, and basketball teams, and—if there's time left over, and assuming the subject comes up—the education the college offers its students.

DARREN GYGI

"I hadn't even thought of a college tour," I told my acquaintance.

"Ooooh," she said. "Baaaaad dad."

She herself had already undertaken several college tours with her children. She had also begun working on her daughter's "résumé."

"Résumé?" I said.

A further symptom of college madness, as I should have known already, is the professionalization of childhood. As the number of applicants increases, competition for the most desirable schools becomes cutthroat, so the ambitious, forward-looking parent will design his child's teenage years to accumulate experiences that will gild a résumé—also called, with disarming candor, a "brag sheet"—and inspire the admiration of a college admissions committee. The nationwide mania for high school Advanced Placement courses is one consequence of childhood résumé-building; the alarming rise in "voluntarism rates" among high school students, particularly in their junior year, is another.

As I've now come to learn, more often than not the AP classes don't earn the advanced place in college that students expect. But this doesn't matter—just as no one seems to mind that volunteer work done purely for the sake of personal standing isn't voluntary by any common definition and certainly isn't evidence of the selflessness that voluntarism is supposed to denote. The bizarre illogic of these schemes is part of what it means to go college crazy. That goes double for the economics of the thing: Average tuition has vastly increased in the last generation, as any parent soon discovers, and the increase in tuition has increased demand for student aid to pay the tuition, which colleges then feel compelled to raise to pay for the increased student aid.

As for the remainder of the tuition—that portion not covered by student aid—it must then be provided by the parents, who work overtime in America's marvelous market economy so their children can spend four years in the care of college professors who despise the market economy and the bourgeois buffoons who work in it overtime so they can send their kids to college, where, coincidentally, the kids will acquire a degree that does next to nothing to prepare them for working in the market economy.

The insanity is pristine, perfectly uncontaminated by common sense. Only a country as rich as this one could afford such a fanciful indulgence. It calls to mind the old phrase from the 1970s, usually applied to people who frittered away their income on expensive liquor or drugs: "It's God's way of telling you you're making too much money." That's what we used to say at Occidental College, anyway.

Andrew Ferguson

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Wisdom of the Warriors

Mark Bauerlein's review of *Soldier's Heart* by Elizabeth Samet was brilliant ("The Write Stuff," December 24). As an alumnus of the Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, and a retired military officer, I can attest to the intellectual earnestness of military cadets and military personnel in general. It does indeed reflect the greater earnestness of their lives they are prepared to sacrifice in the service of their country.

Professor Samet ostensibly approached her assignment to West Point with curiosity. Military personnel constitute a curiosity simply because of their relatively small numbers. Yet, the greater distinction lies in the fact that by joining the military they let go to become part of something larger than themselves. Making that leap requires faith, humility, resolve, and a certain sense of romance. I suspect that was part of Professor Samet's epiphany, too. She has served her cadets well by inspiring in them dedicated scholarship well beyond their undergraduate days and the rest of us by writing her book.

S.K. Gibson III
Mobile, Ala.

Schlesinger on FDR

Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s *Journals* may indeed reveal him to have been an egoist and name-dropper, as P. J. O'Rourke asserts in "Dear Diary, I Think I'm in Love" (December 31/January 7). But far worse was Schlesinger's willingness to sometimes omit from his history books facts that reflected poorly on his heroes. Consider how Schlesinger handled the question of Franklin D. Roosevelt's response to the Holocaust. In various articles and in his 2000 memoir, Schlesinger claimed FDR "did more than anyone else to save" Jews from the Nazis. Roosevelt "did not have an antisemitic bone in his body," Schlesinger approvingly quoted Trude Lash as saying. But Schlesinger knew more than he was letting on.

In 1959, while working on his laudatory history of the New Deal, Schlesinger interviewed former U.S. senator Burton K. Wheeler and obtained a memorandum Wheeler prepared after speaking with FDR on August 4, 1939. Discussing the presidential aspirations of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Roosevelt said to Wheeler that if Hull ran, Mrs. Hull's part-Jewish background "would be raised" by his opponents. "Mrs. Hull is about one quarter Jewish," FDR said. "You and I, Burt, are old English and Dutch stock. We know who our ancestors are. We know there is no Jewish blood in our veins, but a lot of these people do not know whether there is Jewish blood in their veins or not."

But Schlesinger kept the document under wraps. In his writings about Roosevelt, anti-Semitism, Jewish refugees, and the Holocaust, he never mentioned that he knew of FDR's remark about the undesirability of "Jewish blood." But the issue of FDR's views on race did not go away. In 2001, Professor Greg Robinson revealed articles Roosevelt wrote in 1923 and 1925 claiming "the mingling of Asiatic blood with European or American blood produces, in nine cases out of ten, the most unfortunate results," and urging restrictions on the citizenship and property rights of "non-assimilable immigrants." Still there was no comment from Schlesinger on the role of race in FDR's thinking.

Two years ago, I wrote Schlesinger to ask his view of the "Jewish blood" remark. In his reply, he defended FDR's statement as "a neutral comment about people of mixed ancestry." Maybe so. Or maybe it was additional evidence that Roosevelt's views on race could have played a part in shaping his closed-doors refugee policy during the Holocaust. Unfortunately, Arthur Schlesinger did more to cloud the issue than to clarify it.

Rafael Medoff
Director
The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies
Washington, D.C.

Dim Bulbs Catch Fire

My compliments to Andrew Ferguson for informing us in "A Nation of Dim Bulbs" (December 31/January 7) about the federal government forcing compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) down our throats. This federal law is a prime example of liberal do-goodism crashing into the law of unintended consequences. Like most things in the world, CFLs have positive and negative characteristics. Most people, including me, are using them where they make sense while sticking with incandescent bulbs where they don't.

In addition to cosmetic issues and producing light that causes eye strain for many people, CFLs don't work in cold environments and are also a fire hazard.

I know from personal experience that if you use CFLs in a humid environment, like a bathroom or near a cooking area, there is a high likelihood a CFL will short out. However, unlike an incandescent bulb, where a broken filament acts as an off-switch to the current, a shorted-out CFL can start to burn. In my case, smoke started pouring out of the CFL bulb. Had I not been there to immediately turn off the switch it would probably have started a fire and/or caused dangerous gases to be released into my home.

This is another example of why no good law is worth rushing through Congress.

Tom Abert
Manchester, N.H.

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They need more support if we want a safer food supply.

Recent events have exposed weaknesses in our nation's food safety system and shaken consumer confidence in the safety of the food supply. In fact, a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advisory panel concluded that the FDA "suffers from serious scientific deficiencies" and is not positioned to meet current or emerging food safety challenges that fall under the agency's area of responsibilities.

These results should come as no surprise. The FDA has been ignored for far too long. Over the last 15 years, the agency's budget has barely kept pace with inflation, and it is losing key staff at an alarming rate. The FDA has 800 fewer food experts than it had just four years ago – fewer inspectors, fewer scientists and fewer critical food safety staff.

Even though the FDA regulates 80 percent of America's food, it receives about one-third of the nation's food safety budget. That is unsustainable and unacceptable.

We believe Congress and the Administration need to double the FDA budget so that it can hire more highly-qualified staff and inspectors, invest in advanced technologies, build new lab facilities and expand its scientific programs. And we urge Congress and the Administration to work with the food industry and consumer groups to implement new prevention measures that will strengthen America's food safety system and protect consumers.

GMA
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Thank You, Iowa

The Weekly Standard is a magazine of its word. Three weeks ago, we made the case that the country deserved to be liberated from the Clintons and their brand of politics. We promised to be the first to say something we are not accustomed to saying to the Democratic party—thank you. So, to the Iowa Democrats and independents who caucused in such numbers for Obama and even—this hurts—for Edwards, we say: Thank you. You have begun the job. We are confident your brethren in other states will finish it.

Clinton will undoubtedly be on the attack against Obama in New Hampshire. In December, in Iowa, she forecast that the assaults would begin: "Well, now the fun part starts," she said. "We're going to start drawing a contrast, because I want every Iowan to have accurate information when they make their decisions." Well, over 200,000 Iowans made their decisions—and fewer than 3 in 10 wanted Hillary as their nominee. Now, as we prophesied in an earlier editorial, "The 'fun part' for the rest of us will be watching the bitter infighting among the Clintonistas as the wheels come off Hillary's campaign."

Meanwhile, we shouldn't leave Iowa without thanking its citizens for more than apparently sending Hillary Clinton on a path back to the U.S. Senate. We're by no means convinced we would have put Mike Huckabee ahead of his competitors in the GOP field as Iowa Republicans chose to do. But we applaud Huckabee for his industrious and savvy campaign. And we applaud the people of Iowa for stubbornly insisting on making up their own minds. Iowa's voters actively engaged in the electoral process. They turned out to prefer a Republican who was outspent 10 to 1, but who connected with them. In a democracy, that's a rather large part of politics. And, who can't like the fact that on both sides of the aisle last Thursday the "inevitable" candidates went down to defeat?

And what of Barack Obama? He beat Hillary Clinton. He won in a state with a very small minority population. He ran (if one can put it this way) a pretty much color-blind campaign, and Iowa Democrats seem to have rendered a pretty much color-blind verdict. And a calm one. Angry Democrats who wanted a candidate who shared their rage had such a fellow in John Edwards. But after practically decamping to Iowa for the past four years, Edwards came in a distant second. Meanwhile, Democratic women rejected the faux-feminism of Hillary Clinton and preferred Obama. Younger women did so overwhelmingly.

In sum, Iowans turned out in huge numbers to pick the classiest candidate on the Democratic side, and an appealing underdog on the Republican. It's fashionable to look down on the Iowa caucuses. That's wrong. Last week, Iowans rose to the occasion. It was a good week for them, and for the country.

—*William Kristol*

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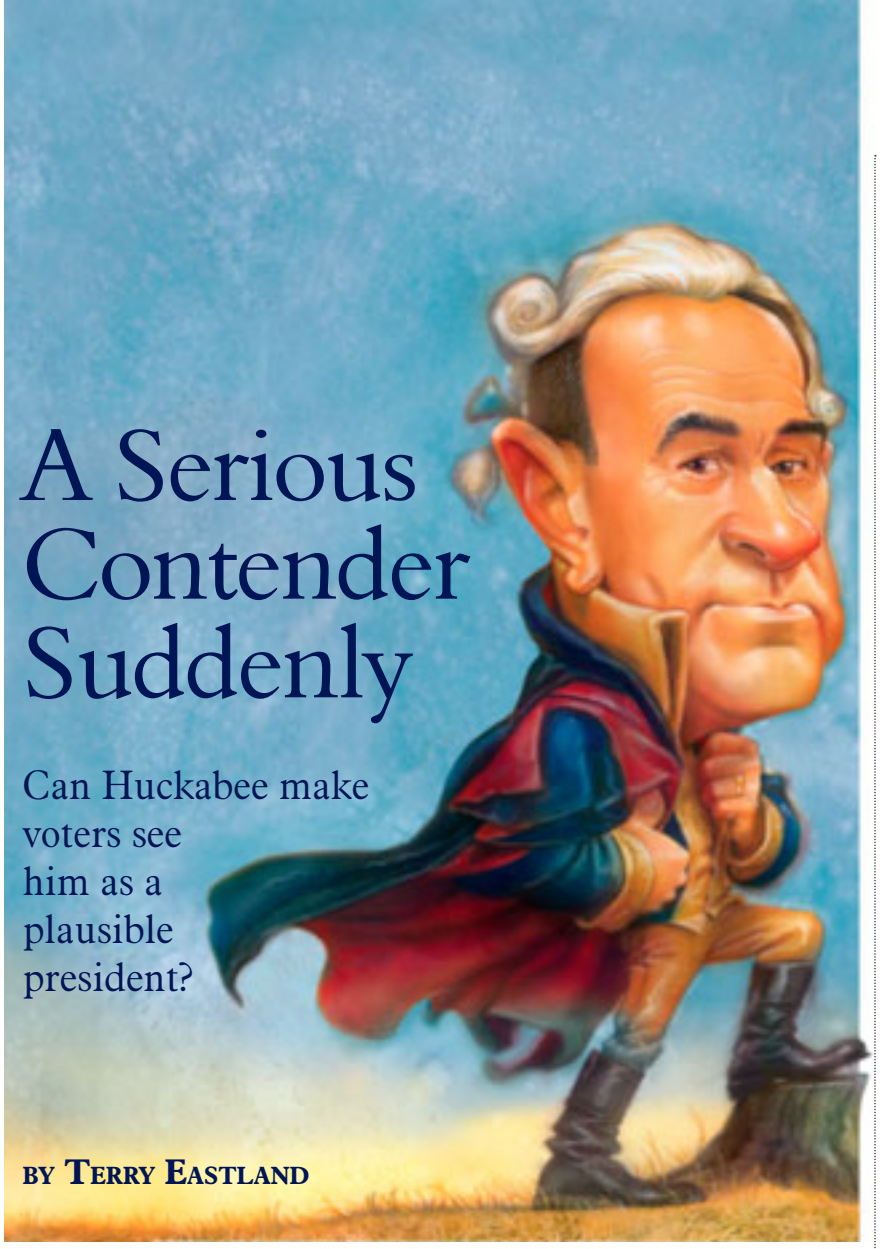

A Serious Contender Suddenly

Can Huckabee make voters see him as a plausible president?

BY TERRY EASTLAND

In his trips to Iowa last summer, Mike Huckabee often joked about how he was actually the frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination, notwithstanding polls showing his support in the low single digits. "None" was polling higher than Giuliani, Romney, or McCain, and Huckabee would grandly announce, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am none of the above."

Huckabee's remarkable victory in the last poll taken in Iowa—the caucuses themselves—was no joking matter to Mitt Romney, who finished a distant second after leading in Iowa polling for much of the year. Huckabee's victory means that the former Arkansas governor will be a serious contender for the nomination at least through the Florida primary on January 29.

Huckabee aides already see a path leading to the nomination: Finish third in New Hampshire on January 8, be competitive in Michigan on January 15, win South Carolina on January 19 and then Florida on January 29, with those victories creating the dynamic for eventual victory. As one aide told me on the eve of the Iowa caucuses, "Four weeks from today he'll either be the nominee or he'll not be."

Huckabee's run a low-budget campaign, and what he needs is a massive infusion of funds to compete in January's fast-paced back-to-back primaries (not to mention in the 19 that take place on February 5's "Super Tuesday"). Most of the money would go to advertising. (Huckabee hasn't entirely ruled out negative ads, so watch for them in South Carolina, where, leading in the polls, he doubtless will face an avalanche of attack ads from Romney.) But funds are also needed to expand Huckabee's staff. He has real talent in his employ—the few ads he ran in Iowa were works of political genius—but the staff is tiny as presidential contenders go. He has few full-time aides and few consultants. He doesn't have a real policy shop or the capability to do his own polling.

None of this hurt Huckabee in Iowa because it is the first state on the presidential nominating schedule. A candidate can target it for months, as Huckabee did, working the state, an aide told me, as if he were in "a race for governor." But only a large national staff can meet the geographical challenges of the intensifying campaign.

While Huckabee's ability to meet the practical demands of January will turn on how well his fundraising goes, this, too, presents a problem. After all, any time a candidate spends asking for money is time the candidate is not at some rally asking for votes.

Huckabee's other challenge is whether he can expand beyond his political base. In Iowa, the entrance polls showed that 60 percent of Republican caucus-goers identified themselves as either "evangelical" or "born-again Christians." Forty-six percent of that group supported Huckabee, a Southern Baptist pastor before entering politics who ran ads highlighting his faith. They accounted for more than 80 percent of his caucus-winning total. Only in a few states—South Carolina is one—are evangelicals likely to constitute anywhere close to such a large portion of the Republican electorate as they did in Iowa.

In an interview with the Fox News Channel the night of the caucuses, Huckabee agreed that many states have "a different voter base," but added that different bases still care "about the same things," noting middle-class "anxiety" about the future.

Anyone paying attention to Hucka-

GARY LOCKE

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bee in recent weeks knows that he has been trying to address the concerns of Americans, as he says, "at the lower ends of the economic scale." He has been talking about the rising costs of energy, health care, and education, and how working- and middle-class Americans are being hurt. The obvious question for Huckabee is whether he can gain much support from non-evangelical voters who are at those "lower ends." He has yet to unveil any policy proposals that might appeal to lower-end voters (regardless of their religious affiliation), and Chip Saltsman, Huckabee's national campaign director, says none should be expected in the next month. Huckabee will have to hope that his expressions of empathy suffice in his efforts to expand beyond his base.

It would be a mistake to assume that he'll be unable to broaden his appeal. Huckabee is an extraordinary communicator—by far the best speaker in the Republican field—and his rhetorical skill helped Iowa voters see him as a plausible president. It's common to associate the presidency with what scholars have called "the rhetorical presidency"—the televised speech from the Oval Office, or the televised press conference, or the talk show interview. Huckabee made use of the bully pulpit in his ten years as governor of Arkansas, and he sees it as central to the presidency he envisions.

What's certain is that Huckabee will continue to run against what he calls the Republican establishment, which he faults for its insular character. On the night of the Iowa caucuses, he said that some Republicans are "out of touch" with what people in the heartland think; they're not interested in the concerns of working- and middle-class Americans and in what they discuss around "the dinner table." Huckabee has also criticized the keepers of various conservative orthodoxies, including the Club for Growth, which ran ads criticizing him for tax increases while he was governor of Arkansas. Look for this debate to escalate in January with Romney taking the lead in opposing Huckabee. The debate could decide the nomination, even the presidency. ♦

The Qualifications of Hillary W. Clinton

A dynasty in decline.

BY DEAN BARNETT

According to the Clinton campaign's narrative of choice, Senator Clinton is the most sensible choice for president because of her "experience." This "experience" obviously doesn't refer to her single full Senate term—even John Edwards has one of those. The "experience" that separates Hillary from the pack is her time in the White House, where she purportedly served as some sort of co-president/consigliere to her husband.

On December 26, the *New York Times* published a lengthy article that gave the lie to such claims. In her time as first lady, Hillary Clinton didn't hold a security clearance. She didn't attend National Security Council meetings. According to the *Times*'s strange formulation, "She did not assert herself on the crises in Somalia, Haiti and Rwanda." Left unanswered is the nagging question of who would have cared if she had "asserted herself."

Hillary Clinton has but one rightful claim to the presidency—her last name. In this regard, she is much like another modern politician, one whom liberals tend to dislike with some passion. That politician is none other than George W. Bush.

The Clinton campaign tried to strike back by insisting that her tenure in the White House featured some serious business. The candidate herself highlighted a perilous goodwill mission to Bosnia in which her airplane had to make a harrowing corkscrew landing to avoid danger. Among those accompanying the first lady on this daring errand were singer Sheryl Crow, the comedian Sinbad, and first daughter Chelsea.

Some in the conservative blogosphere took the trouble to fact-check the candidate's account of her dangerous voyage and found the story, like many other things related to the Clintons, to be factually deficient. Not surprisingly, her account didn't square with official White House records or the actual situation in Bosnia. Senator Clinton claimed the trip took place in 1995, but White House records indicate her two visits to Bosnia occurred in 1996 and 1997. American soldiers based in Bosnia offered a starkly different view of Tuzla, the site of Hillary's (not to mention Sinbad's and Sheryl Crow's) heroics. The soldiers referred to Tuzla as "Disneyland" because it was so safe and so starkly different from surrounding areas.

But arguing over the veracity of the story misses the point. Since even in her own telling, Senator Clinton's adventure had all the accoutrements of a goodwill tour, how precisely did this trip differ from a typical activity of any first lady?

Of course, there was always something audaciously disingenuous about Senator Clinton's claims to "experience." To buy the senator's story, one would have to believe the Clintons' for-public-consumption narrative that

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their relationship was a uniquely close partnership. One would also have to believe that Bill and Hillary worked hand in hand even when Bill's extracurricular activities troubled their marriage.

Only the unusually credulous would accept the notion that Hillary Clinton's time in the White House gave her much more "experience" than that afforded the typical first lady. Indeed, one could plausibly argue that a different first lady of recent vintage, Nancy Reagan, had much more "experience" in running the executive branch than Senator Clinton did. And yet Republicans somehow resisted the urge to anoint Nancy Reagan as their savior.

Even for liberals who swallow hook, line, and sinker the bait of Hillary's "experience," some disturbing questions remain. How has her experience benefited her? Hillary's impact in the Senate has been negligible. Her supporters would probably blame her virtual invisibility in the Senate on her lack of seniority. Yet other junior senators like Tom Coburn have influence in the World's Greatest Deliberative Body.

And then there's the final question that one would imagine preoccupies liberal Clinton supporters: Hillary Clinton sat in the Senate when her colleagues debated the Iraq war resolution. (Despite her penchant for leadership, Senator Clinton reliably relegated herself to the sidelines whenever an important Iraq-related matter arose in the Senate.) As a true lefty would tell it, some senators like Russ Feingold saw through the farrago of administration lies and CIA incompetence. And yet Senator Clinton, in spite of all the benefits that her eight years of serving as co-president provided, blew the big one. She supported the Iraq war.

So one must wonder, What exactly is the rationale that supports Hillary Clinton's candidacy? Her claims to "experience" crumble at anything more than a cursory inquiry. The myth that she served as co-president is transparently bogus. Her time in the Senate has been either undistinguished or ignominious, depending on your viewpoint. And yet some Democrats consider her the safe, predictable choice. Why?

Hillary Clinton has but one rightful claim to the presidency—her last name. In this regard, she is much like another modern politician, one whom liberals tend to dislike with some passion. That politician is none other than George W. Bush.

When the younger Bush hit the national scene, the only thing that distinguished him from dozens of Republicans who were more qualified on paper for the presidency was his surname. And his surname made him the frontrunner. Bush brought nothing special to the party. Other than that magic name.

The same can be said of Hillary

"DON'T WORRY, I HAVE EXPERIENCE. I'M NOT A SURGEON, BUT I WAS MARRIED TO ONE FOR EIGHT YEARS."

MICHAEL RAMIREZ

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Clinton. If you research her position papers, you'll find nothing noteworthy or unique. If she has any exceptional insights or creative policy ideas, she has yet to unveil them. She also lacks the political talents that distinguish her principal Democratic rivals. But she, too, has a magic surname.

On Thursday night, Iowans acknowledged the patent hollowness of Senator Clinton's campaign by rebuking her with an embarrassing third-place finish. Nonetheless, the senator, like a true political warhorse, greeted the setback with a strange "victory" speech. It went on and on, and was filled with empty, awkwardly worded platitudes:

> What is most important now is that, as we go on with this contest, that we keep focused on the two big issues, that we answer correctly the questions that each of us has posed. How will we win in November 2008? By nominating a candidate who will be able to go the distance and who will be the best president on Day One.

The emptiness of her campaign was never more apparent. As she delivered these meaningless comments, assorted relics from the 1990s hovered like ghostly apparitions. To her right stood a beaming but ashen Wes Clark. Madeleine Albright mourned immediately behind her. And to her left stood the former president. As the *New York Times*'s Adam Nagourney aptly put it, President Clinton's "face [was] frozen in a smile." It was never more obvious that the House of Clinton's hour had passed. Its current leader stood in defeat, quite literally eight years into her presidential campaign, and still had nothing to say that didn't predate the current millennium.

Senator Clinton should ditch the claim that she somehow has special qualifications for the presidency. As frankness has always been something of a Clinton trademark, she should embrace the single distinguishing rationale for her candidacy—the illusory comfort that a dynasty provides.

And to signal this candid new tack, she should change her middle name from "Rodham" to "W." ♦

The All-Too-Resistible Romney

He has everything going for him but voters.

BY FRED BARNES

Des Moines

Mitt Romney's messages on taxes, foreign policy, and social issues are perfectly attuned to mainstream Republicans. His campaign events attract upscale Republican crowds filled with professionals (both men and women), businessmen, and middle-class strivers. They're precisely the people pollsters refer to as "likely voters." The Romney crowds resemble those of George Bush senior in 1988, and Bush went on to win the Republican nomination and the presidency. To update the Bush analogy, Romney as a presidential candidate makes one think of what George W. Bush, the son, might have been like if he'd studied harder at Harvard Business School and stayed in New England.

Romney now bills himself as a "full spectrum" conservative. What he means is that he reflects the views of economic, foreign policy, and social conservatives. As such, he comes close to identifying himself as a 21st-century version of Ronald Reagan. And indeed Romney may be—but only on paper and in the minds of his strategists.

There's a painful truth about Romney's candidacy: Republicans in general and conservatives in particular are resisting him in droves. This was first suggested in poll after poll that found Romney stuck in the high 20s. And it was confirmed by his dismal showing in the Iowa caucuses, in which he captured only a sliver of the conservative vote and roughly a quarter of the Republican vote overall.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Here's the profile of a Romney voter in Iowa: upper middle class, urban, someone who thinks a candidate's religion shouldn't matter. That's a pretty narrow constituency, and not only in Iowa. To win the Republican nomination, Romney has to reach well beyond that core.

The voters he needs are the ones Mike Huckabee, the guitar-strumming Baptist preacher from Arkansas, grabbed to win in Iowa. And they're the same ones who earlier rallied behind Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. Their profile: lower middle class, rural, evangelical Christian.

Romney won't attract them by generating excitement—for the simple reason that he's incapable of generating excitement. His speeches are solid and forward-looking and serious and strike all the conservative notes. They qualify as thoughtful, and they stir a polite form of enthusiasm. But excitement? No. He'll have to leave that to others.

Nor is Romney in a position to artfully change his positions on issues. He moved to the right on social issues—abortion, stem cells, marriage, guns—before entering the Republican race. And he has insisted that his new take on these issues represents the real Romney.

I suspect he's right about this. He was probably a good bit more conservative than he appeared when he ran as a moderate against Democratic senator Teddy Kennedy in 1994 (he lost) and for governor of Massachusetts in 2002 (he won).

But changing any of his positions under duress now would produce two results, both bad. The first is that switching probably wouldn't help his

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campaign. The second is that it would inflame a press corps that already loathes Romney for moving to the right on social issues.

I've been amazed at the raw antipathy that so many otherwise reasonable people in the media feel toward Romney. The word they use is "inauthentic." But all presidential candidates are inauthentic to one degree or another. Even Mr. Straight Talk, Senator John McCain, talks differently today about tax cuts and immigration than he used to, but the press doesn't hector him about it.

There's something unique about Romney that repels the press and keeps him from making a connection with hordes of Republican voters. What is it? Romney is obviously a decent guy with a devoted family. People who've worked for Romney speak of him in glowing terms. He succeeded famously in tougher environments—business turnarounds, running the 2002 Winter Olympics—than electoral politics. And he's the smartest guy in the presidential field.

I think his problem is that he's a technocrat who doesn't come across as a regular guy. Bush senior managed to overcome a similar problem and connect with voters. His years in Texas politics transformed Bush. He learned to talk comfortably about country music and ate pork rinds.

Here's the profile of a Romney voter in Iowa: upper middle class, urban, someone who thinks a candidate's religion shouldn't matter. That's a pretty narrow constituency, and not only in Iowa. To win the Republican nomination, Romney has to reach well beyond that core.

Romney's years in Massachusetts politics haven't had the same effect. Heaven knows he tries to be a regular guy. In stump speeches in Iowa, for example, he dwelled on how much he loves the state and its people. He told of traveling across Iowa by train as a 15-year-old and coming to the conclusion that "God must love Iowa." Later, when he worked for a spell in Marshalltown, Iowa, Romney said he learned how terrific Iowans are.

But the I-love-Iowa spiel sounded like boilerplate and just added to the perception of inauthenticity. He'll have to do better than that. Perhaps his emphasis on "change" will ring some bells with Republican voters, though this is usually what Democrats like to hear.

Romney, to his credit, gave one of the boldest defenses of negative TV ads that a candidate has ever made. Normally, candidates are apologetic about "going negative." Romney insisted that his "contrast" ads are the best way of pointing up the differences on issues among candidates. Indeed, they are, and his ads in Iowa probably kept Huckabee from beating him by an even larger margin.

Whatever new twist Romney comes up with in hopes of saving his wounded campaign had better come soon. He's pursuing an early-state strategy that, as you might guess, requires winning in states with early caucuses and primaries. He needs to win at least two of the first four: Iowa, New Hampshire, Michigan, and South Carolina. That's still possible, but hardly likely. ♦

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When the Giving Is Good

Saving Christmas from the economists.

BY HARVEY MANSFIELD

The wrappings are off and the Christmas gifts stand exposed to the light of day. Did you get what you wanted? Christmas is under attack not only for materialism, not only for multicultural failure, but now also for lack of utility. Economists as ambitious as they are cagey—perhaps bored with economics in its usual confines—have become critical of the frenzy of Christmas gift-making. The gist of what they say: Christmas is a highly inefficient way of connecting consumers with goods.

That confident description of Christmas, full of boyish impudence and gleeful irreverence, tells us something about the nature of economics. It could not have been given if we as a people were not devoted to economics, more so than to what is sacred in Christmas. But still such thinking makes us decidedly uneasy.

Now, if we can look at Christmas from the standpoint of economics, why not look at economics from the standpoint of Christmas?

Economic analysis says that consumers would be better off making their own purchases, buying things they know they want, rather than trying to get the benefit out of gifts bought ignorantly for them by others. Worse than ignorance is the imposition of the giver's own taste or views, as when a conservative woman I know kept giving her liberal sister the gift of a subscription to a magazine her sister did not want to read. Christmas offers compelling opportunity to the human temptation to improve one's friends and relatives. As for the economy as a whole, the analysis continues, it would be better off without the surge in sales of Christmas gifts at the end of the year, if only businesses could be sure that the same sales would be spread out more evenly. Thus, however nice it is to receive presents, it is against the general utility that we feel compelled to give them at one time.

Or is it against our liberty to feel compelled to give at all? The economists' critique of Christmas giving exposes a characteristic dilemma in their thinking about utility and liberty. Most of the time economists these days do not care to pass judgment on the things people buy or sell. These are "preferences" not examined within economics; they are givens from which economists take their start. "Preferences" imply priority, one thing preferred to another. Perhaps it might be better to call them whims, not necessarily implying any set preferences but in principle open to sudden change without reason or explanation. Not passing judgment in any way leaves individuals free to make their own choices without being frowned on by moralists.

This is the liberty aspect of economics, and its premise is the sovereignty of the individual. The individual can want what he wants, not what he ought to want or, in someone else's analysis, is naturally inclined to want. The sovereignty of individual preferences also helps economics by freeing it from having to understand human nature. Economists can make mathematical models of behavior without considering whether their mathematics describes actual human beings accurately. Economics, no longer con-

Harvey Mansfield is professor of government at Harvard and research fellow in liberty and virtue at the Hoover Institution.

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fined to a particular subject—namely, money—can expand into other fields such as psychology, sociology, and political science.

On the other hand is the utility aspect of economics, revealed in the critique of Christmas giving as less useful than it could be. Here economics does pass judgment on preferences, preferring those that are useful over useless whims. Here, too, is the connection we expect between economics and learning to be economical and to economize. In this aspect economics is not a means to any end you may think up but itself an end, a way of life—the life of efficiency and frugality. This life is bourgeois, middle-class, and opposed to your wasting your money on whims, as do rich aristocrats.

In the history of economics there is a movement from objective utility to free, subjective preferences, but from the first, economics was divided between utility and liberty. Adam Smith praised the free market as "the system of natural liberty," but he also deplored spending on "trinkets of frivolous utility," which are naturally bought and sold under that system. In *The Wealth of Nations* he contrasts the waste and vain display of aristocratic hospitality (the ancestor of the free lunch) with the productive, profit-seeking frugality of the commercial class. The fundamental incoherence in economics is that it wants to pinch pennies (utility) but has no reason to stop you if you don't (liberty). That is why economics is always important but never decisive. Economists never say, Listen to me! They always say, Listen to me if you want to know what I have to say.

To justify Christmas giving we need to look past the hasty confusion of the "consumer," so described by economics, to the soul of the giver and see how it is improved by the virtue of generosity. The benefit of giving is more to the giver than to the receiver—a paradox better known to common sense and the Bible than to economics. For having a generous soul saves one from living in the relentless anxiety of never knowing whether one has enough for oneself. Of course, to be generous one must calculate what one can afford, and one must observe the chosen recipient carefully to see, not merely what he wants, but what good thing he can be induced to enjoy. Thus economics has an honorable role in the service of generosity, a role more useful, hence more economical, than attacking generosity.

And let us not forget the advantage of generosity to liberty. The commonest form of slavery is slavery to money, and generosity is a kind of liberation as well as utility for yourself. A country gentleman generous with his rustic hospitality had a better inkling of that liberation than Adam Smith with all his studied devotion to natural liberty. With the aid of a little feudalism lingering in our democratic, materialist age you can have the two great goods economics wants you to have but does not know how to achieve on its own. You can then crown these goods by taking a reasonable measure of pride for having spent your money well. Instead of damning a commercial society for being materialistic, instead of despising Christmas giving for not being properly materialistic, you can do your part to soften our materialism and make it more intelligent. ♦

"The Huckabee forces are mad at Romney because of TV ads he's airing that are critical of Huckabee's record as Arkansas governor for 10 years. The ads focus on immigration, spending, taxes, and pardons. In truth, they are conventional contrast ads of the sort seen in practically every campaign in America in which candidates have enough money to get on television....

Huckabee has actually been tougher on Romney than Romney has been on him. Huckabee has called Romney 'dishonest' and suggested that anyone like Romney who runs a dishonest campaign would be a dishonest president." *–FRED BARNES*

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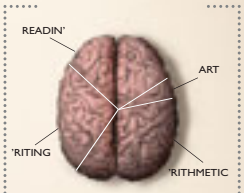

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Ted Olson

Olson, who came to Washington to work in the Reagan Justice Department, represented George W. Bush and Richard Cheney in the *Bush v. Gore* cases stemming from the 2000 presidential elections. In 2001 he was appointed Solicitor General. William Safire has called Olson "this generation's most persuasive advocate." In his spare time, he is advising the Giuliani campaign.

John Podhoretz

Podhoretz was recently named editorial director of *Commentary* magazine. In 1995 he helped launch *THE WEEKLY STANDARD.* Today he is our movie critic. He is the author of *Bush Country: How Dubya Became a Great President While Driving Liberals Insane* and, most recently, *Can She Be Stopped?: Hillary Clinton Will Be the Next President of the United States Unless . . . .* John will tell us what comes after "Unless"!

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Keeper of the Sakharov Flame

Elena Bonner fears for the future of Russia

By Cathy Young

For one elderly woman in Massachusetts, events in Russia—where a brief experiment in freedom is foundering under a rising tide of authoritarianism—have both personal and political resonance. She is Elena Bonner, the 84-year-old widow of world-famous Russian nuclear physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov, and a heroic figure in her own right.

In the twilight of her life, Bonner is watching developments in her native country—a country she still considers home—from afar. While she is still a Russian citizen, since 2002 she has lived in the United States, where her son and daughter from her first marriage emigrated in the 1970s. At first, she divided her time between Russia and America. Today, because of her heart condition, she no longer travels and seldom leaves the house.

Formerly chairman of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation and co-chairman of the Commission on the Commemoration of the Legacy of Andrei Sakharov in Russia, Bonner has been in de facto retirement for several years. "I now divide my time between my balcony and the hospital," she said wryly in August as we had tea on the balcony of her one-bedroom apartment in Brookline. Yet her mind has lost none of its sharpness, and her opinions are as strong as ever. "I am a private person," she says. "But no one can deny me the right to speak out when something gets my goat." And that, she certainly does.

Cathy Young is the author of Growing Up in Moscow: Memories of a Soviet Girlhood *(Ticknor & Fields, 1989).*

Bonner is one of a handful of Russians whose participation in public life spans both the dissident movement of the 1970s—the first significant challenge to the totalitarian Soviet regime—and the democratic movement in post-Communist Russia. Her life has been a hard one. In 1937, both her parents were arrested in Stalin's purges; her father was shot, her mother sent to the Gulag. Bonner served as a military nurse in World War II and was wounded twice, with permanent damage to her eyesight.

> As much as Bonner loathes the Putin regime, she has some harsh words for its predecessor, idealized by many Russian liberals. The 'corruption-ridden, mafia-like nature of state power in Russia today is also Yeltsin's legacy. Only now, it has become even more blatant.'

In 1970, as an activist in the nascent human rights movement, she met the widowed Sakharov. After their marriage in 1972, Bonner became a target of Soviet propagandists seeking to explain the scandalous fact that the leading Soviet scientist and a recipient of the highest state honors had turned against that state. They depicted Sakharov as a besotted man manipulated by a power-hungry, depraved seductress with Zionist ties (Bonner is partly of Jewish background). In 1980, Bonner shared her husband's internal exile in the city of Gorky, east of Moscow.

Everything changed when Gorbachev came to power and in 1986 recalled Sakharov from Gorky as one of his first gestures toward opening up the Soviet regime. In 1989, Sakharov was elected to the Soviet Union's first and last real parliament, the All-Union Congress of People's Deputies, and was one of the leaders of the democratic oppo-

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The image of Bonner at Sakharov's December 1989 funeral was etched into the public mind.

CHRIS NIEDENTHAL / TIME LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

sition bloc that included Boris Yeltsin. But in December that year, Sakharov died of a sudden heart attack at the age of 68—shortly after Gorbachev rudely berated him in a televised Congress session for pushing too quickly for a multiparty system. Sakharov's funeral drew a crowd a hundred-thousand strong, and the image of Bonner as the quietly grieving woman at his coffin was etched into the public mind.

Now, times have changed again. The liberal, pro-Western ideas championed by Sakharov are out of favor in Putin's Russia, and so is Bonner herself. In recent years, pro-government newspapers have once again started treating her as *persona non grata*, a sellout in the pocket of Uncle Sam. The tone taken toward her is typified by a sneering aside in a December interview by political analyst and television host Maksim Shevchenko: Arguing for an "authentically Russian" form of liberal democracy, Shevchenko commented that "it wasn't Dr. Sakharov who laid the foundations of Russian liberalism while battling for his wife's right to have her teeth done in Switzerland." (In fact, Sakharov had gone on several hunger strikes to secure permission for Bonner to travel abroad for life-saving heart surgery.)

Such attacks leave Bonner unfazed, even bitterly amused, but the bigger picture in Russia saddens her deeply. Bonner believes it is a mistake to see Russia as backsliding toward the Soviet era. "This is a completely different historical point. Analogies to the Stalin era or to the 1970s do not feel real to me," she said in a telephone interview days after Putin's United Russia party won the massively rigged parliamentary elections on December 2. "I am closer to the view that there are many parallels to Germany in the 1930s. The same decrease in unemployment, economic stabilization; people are living better. Putin, like Hitler, is seen as the man who brought

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Elena Bonner in Brookline with her daughter, Tatiana Yankelevich, 2003

AP PHOTO / JULIA MALAKIE

Russia out of chaos, raised her from her knees. It is ridiculous and embarrassing when the leaders of United Russia refer to Putin as 'the national leader.' What's a leader? The *Führer*. It's a carbon copy of a word that inevitably evokes certain associations."

So far, of course, Russia has no state ideology similar to Nazism; however, Bonner cautions, "there is a very strong nationalist idea, as well as the idea of Russian Orthodoxy as a state church. Authoritarianism, Orthodoxy, populism—not even focused on 'the people,' but on ethnic Russians—this formula, which is being more and more broadly adopted by the powers that be, seems to me a very frightening direction for my country. A large part of the population is unhappy about this. But when push comes to shove, even most of those people will not vote for the opposition but for Putin and United Russia, because they've been persuaded that the rise in prosperity today is the merit of Putin and United Russia."

As much as Bonner loathes the Putin regime, she also has some harsh words for its predecessor, idealized by many Russian liberals today. (She broke with the new Russian government under Yeltsin, resigning from his Human Rights Commission in 1994 in protest against the first war in Chechnya.) It's worth remembering, she says, that the first "fake elections" in post-Soviet Russia took place in 1996.

"After Yeltsin died, there were many admiring comments about the transformation of state and society under his leadership," she says. "But nothing was said about the fact that the corruption-ridden, mafia-like nature of state power is also Yeltsin's legacy. Only now, it has become even more blatant. I think everything that has happened in Russia in the 21st century is, in a sense, on the one hand a continuation of Yeltsin's economic 'reform' and the looting of the country, which peaked under Yeltsin—but at the same time, we have lost all the gains in democratic development for which the foundations were also laid under Yeltsin."

Was there a turning point when the pro-democracy movement missed its chance? If there was, Bonner believes it came in 1992-93, when the democrats agreed to give up on the idea of a constitutional convention with popularly elected and accountable delegates, and to participate instead in a nonbinding "constitutional conference" that helped the government's experts craft Russia's constitution. "Formally the constitution was a good one, but it was tailored to one president," says Bonner, who refused to "play the game" and participate in the constitutional conference. "And most important, without enforcement mechanisms, that constitution set the stage for all the changes of the following years"—including the drastic centralization of power and the rewriting

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of election laws to systematically exclude the opposition.

Another fatal mistake, she believes, was allowing much of the Soviet-era Communist elite to seize power in the guise of newly minted "democrats": "I didn't think that the Communist elite needed to be tried on criminal charges and sent to Siberia. But they absolutely should have been removed from positions of power, and even from access to jobs in the administration of government." While she strongly disagrees with the notion that the Russian people are congenitally unfit for freedom, whether by their genes or their cultural history, she understands that building a free society in post-Communist Russia could not have been an easy task. But, in her eyes, that makes "the enlightened democrats who fell for the tricks of the old elite" even more guilty of failing their country.

While she strongly disagrees with the notion that the Russian people are congenitally unfit for freedom, she understands that building a free society in post-Communist Russia could not have been an easy task. But, in her eyes, that makes 'the enlightened democrats who fell for the tricks of the old elite' even more guilty of failing their country.

Bonner's criticism is directed at the West as well. "The West has never truly understood what's going on, and it still doesn't. On the one hand, they are too optimistic; on the other hand, they are mired in an energy crisis, and right now it's very difficult for European leaders or even for Bush to have a principled position." She bristles, in particular, at the post-September 11 idea of Putin as a partner in the global War on Terror: "By passing off the tragedy of Chechnya as a part of the struggle against global terrorism, Russia has deceived the West and persistently pushed the Chechen population into the radical Islamist corner."

Bonner's disappointment with the West also has a more personal dimension: what she considers the shameful neglect of Sakharov's legacy. In 1993, she donated a large collection of Sakharov's papers that had been smuggled out of the Soviet Union—documents pertaining not only to Sakharov himself but also to the human rights movement—to Brandeis University, where a Sakharov Archive was established, run by émigré human rights activist Alexander Gribanov and Bonner's daughter, Tatiana Yankelevich. Several years later, private funding for the archive dried up, and by 2003 it was in danger of being shut down. In 2004, arrangements were made to transfer it to the Davis Center at Harvard, where Yankelevich currently oversees a small, financially strapped Sakharov Program on Human Rights. The program sponsors seminars on human rights in the Soviet Union.

To Bonner, all of this seems painfully inadequate. She has fond memories of Ronald Reagan, who mentioned Sakharov in several speeches in the 1980s, including his New Year's radio message to the Soviet people broadcast over the Voice of America on January 1, 1987. "Reagan had a soft spot for Sakharov and regarded him as a like-minded man," she says. Today, she detects among American public figures only "an insulting indifference."

The preservation of her late husband's legacy is the final task of Bonner's life—especially important, in her view, because she is concerned that the new regime in Russia may try to recast Sakharov as a Russian nationalist and statist in its own image. "I fear very much that this will start happening as soon as I leave this world," she says. Despite her failing health, Bonner worked for three years to prepare Sakharov's diaries, along with her own, for publication; a three-volume edition was published in Moscow in 2006. (Bonner is also the author of two memoirs which have been translated into English: *Alone Together*, the story of her and Sakharov's Gorky exile, published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1986, and *Mothers and Daughters*, an account of growing up in Stalin's Russia, published in 1992.)

As Putin's presidency nears its end, Bonner hazards few guesses as to what the future will bring. She is not sure what relevance the legacy of the 1970s human rights movement of which she was a part may have for the opposition in today's Russia, operating in very different circumstances. If there is one element of the human rights movement that she would like to see the new generation preserve, it is its commitment to "moral principles."

For the near future, she sees no viable way for the opposition to challenge the new ruling clique's monopoly on power. Participation in the presidential elections can only "lend a veneer of legitimacy to what Putin is doing; on the other hand, nonparticipation suggests the lack of a platform."

In a New Year's greeting emailed to friends, reflecting on the state of her country, Bonner quoted some lines about Russia by the 19th-century poet Nikolai Nekrasov that capture the present commingling of hope and despair:

She will survive it all, and pave
A wider road, a better way;
A pity neither you nor I
Will live to see that wondrous day. ♦

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The Natural and His Wife

Bill Clinton's partner—in life and politics—has yet to repeat his success

By Noemie Emery

Between January 20, 1993, and January 20, 2001, the Clinton White House was home to three boomers of boundless ambition, high expectations, and vast self-regard, all three of whom thought that they ought to be president. Of these, only one—Bill Clinton—really was president. But the other two—his wife Hillary and his vice president, Albert Gore Jr.—firmly believed that they should be and viewed Bill's terms in office as the jumping-off place to their own.

Unfortunately, only one—Bill, again—was a born, or even a good, politician, making the two others dependent upon him, first to lift them to within striking distance of power, and then to help them campaign. But Bill, too, had his problems, and so needed them: to keep him focused and disciplined, to impose some sense of order, to reassure voters disturbed by his fast-and-loose manners, and at least in the case of Hillary Clinton, to help him suppress and/or cope with his bimbo eruptions, if and when worst came to worst.

For Love of Politics
Bill and Hillary Clinton: The White House Years
By Sally Bedell Smith
Random House
608 pp., $27.95

Sensing his needs, Bill picked his running mates carefully, but the resulting arrangements were not without stress. Bill needed both Gore and Hillary, but often resented attempts to restrain him. Gore and Hillary needed Bill, and resented each other. Hillary was in a state of continuous rage over Bill's chronic adulteries. And Gore, a senator's son who had been pointed from birth at the White House, and was seen by his friends and possibly by himself as being "more presidential" than Clinton, was in a state of anxiety about his own run.

How this played out is laid out in hair-raising detail in Sally Bedell Smith's account of an administration and marriage like none other in history, and one that bred the highest level of dysfunctional angst ever seen in the White

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Hillary Clinton's concession speech, Des Moines, January 3, 2008

AP PHOTO / CHARLIE NEIBERGALL

House—except for those moments when Richard Nixon dined alone.

At the core of it all was William J. Clinton, by all accounts an astounding political talent, a policy wonk who also loved people, a creature born and hardwired to seek and win votes. "He was a natural, with all the advantages of an extrovert born in a southern culture that emphasized human drama," Smith tells us, and then goes on to dissect and assess his appeal:

> When working a crowd, Bill would lean forward and move in close to individuals. . . . When asked a question, he often responded with a question, which instantly flattered his interlocutor. He knew how to pause and let words sink in, and then took care with his answers, emphasizing points of agreement. . . . He had an unusual capacity to speak about complicated issues such as globalization in lucid and simple language, with an informality that prevented him from seeming preachy or pedantic. . . . The way he talked was an invaluable political tool.

So were his gifts for projection and empathy. As one aide said, he could make "constant emotional scans of everyone in the room in real time while he was thinking," and calibrate a response to the mood of each listener. "He tried to find out who you were in the audience and give you a sense he was like you," Eric Liu, a speechwriter and adviser once said. This set Bill apart from both Gore and Hillary, who had people skills in negative territory, found strangers difficult, and suffered greatly from their inability to read people's moods. But Bill seemed to thrive on these meetings, and even to need them, which was the key to his great gift for politics.

"He wasn't pretending to enjoy superficial relations. . . . This is what he liked. It is sincere phoniness," reported journalist Jonathan Alter. Added writer Benjamin Barber: "He has the narcissist's gift of making conversation about him feel like conversation about you." His mind was capacious, intuitive, wide-ranging, and supple, capable of absorbing facts and rearranging them in striking new patterns, of dazzling people with impromptu orations, of tackling two or three things with such virtuosity that childhood friends would frequently

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seek out his company for the pleasure of "watch(ing) him think."

At other times, he would "power down, like a computer going into sleep mode" to save energy, or slip into a trance-like state of distraction, the sign of a mind artistic in nature, as opposed to the legalistic or reasoned variety. But when he was "on" he could be irresistible. "Ultimately," as Sally Bedell Smith tells us, "his sheer brainpower and magnetism covered a multitude of sins," which also were there in abundance, as future events would make evident, when they would not quite cover enough.

Bill, it was clear, had an array of gifts that most power-seekers would kill for, but even these were frequently undermined by the stunning array of his faults. He was wholly unfocused, completely disorganized, and prey to a set of adolescent compulsions that even he could not start to explain. In his first two years as president (or before the Republican Congress forced focus upon him), his White House was described as resembling a college dormitory, a kindergarten, a free-for-all, or a claque of small children engaged in a soccer game, in a tumultuous scramble to fall on the ball. For no good reason, he would stay up all night, and be so exhausted the following morning he would doze off the next day. ("He can barely stay awake at today's meeting," Robert Reich noted, of one early session. "His eyelids droop and his pupils move up under them, leaving nothing but a narrow sliver of white.")

"Bill's lifelong inability to set boundaries threw policy making into turmoil," Smith informs us. "Meetings scheduled for ten minutes routinely stretched to two hours as Bill pursued his favorite digressions. One session on Bosnia lasted seven hours without coming to a resolution. Rather than following a crisp checklist, Bill delayed decisions as long as possible," endlessly seeking new facts. Every day, said an aide, was "a long road with quite a few detours" as Bill veered off course and off schedule. Everything was delayed, and everyone was kept waiting, from world leaders such as Helmut Kohl and John Major to a group of elderly Holocaust survivors, who were left standing under a tent in a rainstorm for hours while Bill loitered elsewhere.

Then there were his frequent explosions of temper, categorized by George Stephanopoulos (who absorbed most of them) into at least six major types: the morning roar, the telephone nightcap, the slow boil, the silent scream, the last gasp, and, more complex than the others, the show "for the benefit of someone else in the room."

Later, Bill would say that he lived "parallel lives," one sunny and open, one dark and concealed, "where the secrets are hidden," among them a rage that grew "deeper and stronger" and whose sources he couldn't explain. Smith suggests it stemmed from his unsettled childhood, when he hid his household's disorder behind a façade of normality: "It was dark down there," he said of his inner life and its secrets—and a source now and then of erratic behavior.

> With a keen sense of self-preservation, Bill Clinton picked his two most important political partners to help himself function, to compensate for his frailties, to atone for his sins. Intuitive, seductive, empathetic, and sometimes inspired, but wholly deficient in focus and discipline, he sought out partners with focus and discipline, and orderly, literal, minds.

With all of this chaos, Bill was in need of someone to restrain him in order to function, which led to his reliance on Hillary, and to a lesser extent on Al Gore. Bill needed a wife who would allow him to stray and not leave him, but would instead turn her anger against their joint enemies. This Hillary was; but she was also his opposite—disciplined, focused, intense, and pedantic—the essence of order, the Super Ego to his lively and rampaging Id. In Hillary, a woman who shared his intense love of politics but brought an entirely opposing set of skills (and deficiencies) to their joint quest for power, Bill found his corrective, his balance wheel, his apologist, and his true mate.

While they shared the same goals, she was his opposite in mind and in temperament: wholly controlled and rigidly disciplined, with a stolid, linear intelligence as opposed to his free-range, intuitive mind. At the same time, she had poor people skills, disliked campaigning, and found it grinding hard work.

"She is always on, like an assembly line," Smith quotes a fundraiser. "Every interaction we have had has been identical. . . . She is the most controlled and disciplined person I ever met." Her control slipped only in the case of his scandals, which, as part of their bargain, she was expected both to suppress and excuse. She usually finessed this by redirecting her fury toward Clinton's accusers, but she remained in a perpetual state of resentment and anger, which spilled over to Bill and his aides.

"Her dissatisfaction could curdle the atmosphere when she directed her ire at his subordinates," Smith informs us. "Washington advisers found it 'demoralizing.' . . . The most unnerving aspect . . . was their use of profanity, especially 'f—k' and 's—t.'"

"Rather than insult him directly, she used the staff,"

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said Robert Boorstin. "People were scared of her because they knew she could chop off their testicles if she chose." And David Gergen had added, "She would launch a deadly missile straight at [Bill's] heart, and just before it hit, the missile would explode, the shrapnel hitting the staff." To Smith, "Hillary's anger was bound up in the intricacies of her marital bargain," which balanced respect and power on the political level with betrayal and humiliation on the personal side.

Yet the couple remained bonded and welded together, bound by their mutual passion for politics, which was like a third party inside the marriage, and a unifying force. Smith calls them "force multipliers" when it came to each other. "They were partners who could not get along without each other," said Eleanor Acheson, who had known Hillary since Wellesley, and served as assistant attorney general during the Clinton years. At a crucial moment near the end of her first run for the Senate at the end of 2000, as Hillary sat in her van, "Bill leaned in for an intense discussion, his long fingers pointing and gesturing, his eyes fixed on her and hers back on him. In the thrall of another race, they both seem[ed] in a kind of momentary rapture."

REUTERS / CORBIS

One can think of no other political couple of whom a similar thing could have been written. A Clinton presidency would be a bivalve, a two-headed being. And into this intense and bizarre situation stepped a largely unknowing Al Gore.

Unlike most running mates, Al Gore had been Bill Clinton's equal and, until the moment that Bill was elected, Gore seemed the senior partner of the team. Son of Senator Albert Gore Sr., born to one of the first power couples in American politics, he had been a Washington insider since childhood, dandled on the knees of vice presidents, sent to elite schools with other heirs of political figures, helping his parents host political soirees at the capital's Fairfax Hotel.

He took his father's old seat in the House in 1976 at age 28, and his father's old seat in the Senate eight years after that, where he distinguished himself with hard work on serious technical issues. He ran for president at 39 in 1988, in a campaign in which, running on his own for the first time in his life, he proved a terrible national candidate, with his wonkish credentials unmatched by political skills.

But running as the underside of Bill's ticket, with Bill there to strategize and carry the brunt of campaigning, even Gore's dullness gave strength to the ticket, and the normality of the idyllic Gore marriage tended to rub off on the Clintons, and made the pairs seem like two of a kind. Looking ahead to his own run eight years later, Gore was determined to establish himself as a full partner to Clinton, negotiating a written contract before taking office that gave him a weekly lunch with the president, on which he insisted, plus authority on a wide range of issues—national security and foreign policy, as well as communications and the environment—in which he had shown expertise.

In the administration, Gore served the same function as Hillary in some ways, imposing order on "Bill's panoramic but haphazard intelligence" with the rigors of his more formal and orderly mind. But he could never begin to equal the influence that Hillary had built up over years with her husband, and in any contest between them for Bill's attention, the vice president would be a poor second. Turf wars first broke out between them on the campaign bus, and after the election an article in the *New York Times Magazine* quoted a friend of Hillary's saying that Gore "would have to adjust to a smaller role" in the administration, and that "Al Gore hasn't yet realized there is going to be a co-presidency but he's not going to be part of the co."

By the second year of the administration, reality had begun to set in: "When people ask me what it's like being number two at the White House, I tell them, 'she seems to enjoy it,'" Gore had joked at the Gridiron dinner in 1994, at a time when Hillary's role as health care czarina had overshadowed not only himself but the president. What this meant was that the administration had not one, but three, major centers of power: one president, and two potential presidents who intended to follow him, a first lady and vice president, both of whom were empowered as never in history.

Canny advisers sensed the tensions inherent in this

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unforeseen set of developments. David Gergen "called the 'three headed system' a 'rolling disaster.'" In Bruce Reed's words, having "'three forces to be reckoned with' added yet another layer of perplexity and rivalry" to an already contentious West Wing. Bill not only had two people battling to become his adviser, he had two ambitious and putative heirs as well.

"It was an open secret that some of Hillary's advisers . . . nurtured dreams that Hillary, not Gore, would follow Bill," Smith tells us, quoting Betsey Wright, the Clintons' chief aide in Arkansas, saying, "There are a great many people talking very seriously about her succeeding him. Friends, Democrats, people out across the country think it is a very viable plan." As early as 1974 Bill had been saying, "She could be president someday. She could go to any state and be elected to the Senate," and during the 1992 campaign he had said to Gail Sheehy, "It doesn't bother me for people to see her and get excited and say she would be president too."

At the Democrats' 1996 convention, some party elders had put forward her prospects of running for the Senate from Illinois, her home state. But Hillary preferred New York as being bigger, richer, and the home of big media, and when Daniel Patrick Moynihan announced his retirement, Hillary seized her main chance. At a White House Christmas party in December 1997, New York Democratic state chairwoman Judith Hope, a native of Arkansas, first raised the issue, saying to Hillary, "I wish you would run." Bill embraced the idea as a way for Hillary to step out on her own, to extend his legacy, and to prolong his political life.

After 1998, with the Monica Lewinsky scandal and the impeachment that followed, a Senate race took on new importance as an added reward for past suffering. According to Madeleine Albright, Bill "was eager for Hillary to win . . . to recompense her for all she had to put up with . . . and also [as] a way for him to get back into campaigning," which would have otherwise come to an end. Others thought that they had to keep on campaigning, as it was their *raison d'être*, and they could imagine no other life. "The Senate race kept them in public life," said Bill's friend Tom Siebert. "They grabbed the brass ring early in their lives, and running for elective office was in her DNA as much as his."

Oddly, Bill's impeachment and scandal were, in the long run, a blessing for Hillary, as they won her immense sympathy as the loyal, long-suffering, and put-upon partner, and her successful stint as the party's leading campaigner in the 1998 midterm elections made her a political star. The glow and the impact carried into 2000, long enough to safely elect her, and Monica Lewinsky did little political damage in one of the bluest of political states.

It was less of a blessing, however, for Gore, who was embarking on the campaign he had been planning since Clinton's election, and on whom the scandals would take the steepest toll. There was no sympathy for a betrayed and embarrassed vice president, and while Hillary campaigned only in Bill-friendly country, Gore had to carry his case to 49 other states of the Union, where affection for Bill ran less high. Too effusive in defending Bill when the scandal first broke and later during impeachment, Gore switched to an awkward condemnation when he made his announcement, and never found a coherent way of addressing a political legacy which was, far more than most, mixed.

> In the administration, Gore served the same function as Hillary in some ways, imposing order on 'Bill's panoramic but haphazard intelligence' with the rigors of his more formal and orderly mind. But he could never begin to equal the influence that Hillary had built up over years with her husband, and in any contest between them for Bill's attention, the vice president would be a poor second.

Additional problems came from Bill Clinton himself, a prima donna who would not leave center stage. "For all his praise of Al Gore in scores of speeches," Smith tells us, "Bill's behavior throughout the year—making passive-aggressive remarks, belittling Gore . . . grabbing the spotlight . . . and continuing to argue his innocence . . . betrayed ambivalence about a Gore victory, at least one earned on the Vice President's own terms."

Annoyed at mistakes made by Gore in his first months of campaigning, Bill complained in comments to friends, and then in leaks to reporters, which led to cover stories that described the campaign as "off and stumbling" in *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*. Where Ronald Reagan, the last two-term president to hand off his torch to a loyal vice president, had gracefully relinquished the spotlight at the 1988 Republican convention to George H.W. Bush, Bill kept on hogging the stage. In the four days leading up to the Democrats' 2000 convention in Los Angeles, Bill and Hillary soaked up airtime and newsprint, monopolizing the attention that ought to have gone to the nominee of their party. On the Saturday and Sunday before the Monday of Bill's choreographed "farewell," there was a non-stop orgy of celebration and fundraising, in which they raked in millions of Hollywood dollars, "distracting attention from the presidential race, siphoning off Demo-

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cratic money, and further angering the Vice President and his team."

Even worse was Bill's habit of wrenching the public's attention back to things and incidents most Democrats wished to forget. On the Thursday before the convention opened, "Bill made headlines by engaging in a soul-baring conversation with . . . one of his spiritual counselors." Appearing before a crowd of 4,500, "the President revisited his experiences as a 'sinner,' at a moment when Al Gore least needed such a reminder. Bill once again insisted that he had sufficiently apologized for his 'terrible mistake.'"

Worse still, only a few days before the election, he would appear as the *Esquire* cover boy, looking every bit the Bill of the Lewinsky affair, legs spread wide apart, hands splayed on his knees, a leer on his countenance. In the interview, Bill "mentioned Al Gore just twice in passing, defended himself against the controversies of his presidency, castigated his critics, and said the Republicans owed him an apology," just the thing his vice president needed to win independents in crucial swing states. It was no wonder that Gore "essentially left the White House and played down his relationship," did not seek Bill's advice even when it might have been helpful, and resisted references to the genuine accomplishments that he and Bill Clinton had racked up.

A related development was Gore's competition with Hillary, whose race for the Senate took on the dimensions of a national, even presidential, campaign: "With the Hillary and Gore campaigns revving up at the same time, the three-way tensions evident . . . since 1993 became a more serious problem," Smith tells us. "Not only was Hillary unavailable as a campaigner, she was poaching top Democratic fund-raisers and donors who would normally concentrate on the Vice President . . . [and] began directly competing with the Vice President for money, sometimes at his own fund-raising events."

One sign of this was that, starting in 1999, White House events that could have been used to boost Gore were shunted to Hillary, who began to preempt more and more of the spotlight. "In 1997, Hillary's office had listed thirty-one major speeches on the White House website. Two years later, that number had jumped to eighty-six—four times as many as those listed for her husband and Gore together."

Hillary was given the rollout of popular government programs, including the September 2000 violence-in-media report of the Federal Trade Commission, over which the two campaigns wrangled for days. Raising 60 percent of her funds from out-of-state sources, Hillary went head-to-head with the vice president in competing for money from the party's big donors, who would normally have focused on the presidential campaign. On the Saturday night before Gore's convention, Hillary collected $1.1 million for her Senate campaign from a star-studded crowd at a "Gala Salute" to her husband, the president, who later collected a similar sum for his library the next day at Barbra Streisand's Hollywood residence.

At another time, Hillary insisted on crashing a fundraiser held for Gore in Los Angeles by a friend of his family, and then "shocked the Vice President's supporters by soliciting donations" in front of a stunned Tipper Gore. As a result, the couples, and the campaigns, became estranged at a critical moment. As Smith says, "The colliding agendas of the President, First Lady, and Vice President were gifts to the Republicans, whose efforts to tag Gore with his boss's weaknesses were paying off."

On November 7, 2000, the Clintons watched the election returns from their suite at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Manhattan, Bill watching with the fascination of a fan at a ball game as Hillary won by a 55-43 margin over her hapless opponent, while Gore's triumph at eight o'clock that night turned into a Bush victory at two in the morning, which turned into a dead heat around dawn. While Hillary preened, Gore descended into electoral limbo, 36 days of recounts that clarified nothing, lawsuits seeking to void or certify thousands of ballots, and innumerable court rulings that favored one side or another and were, in turn, overturned by new courts the next day.

On December 12, with constitutional deadlines approaching and no end in sight, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the Supreme Court of Florida,

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and froze the process in place with Bush holding on to a fragile majority. The next day, Gore conceded, putting an end to his decades-long quest to be president. On December 21, Gore and Clinton met in the White House at Gore's request for a bitter postmortem on the election, with Gore blaming Clinton's misconduct, and the president blaming Gore's numerous errors of judgment.

This time, both men were right.

Between the election in early November and Bush's inauguration the following January, the Clintons indulged in a nonstop orgy of self-celebration, in part a loving farewell to Bill's two terms in office and, in part, a triumphant launching of Hillary's Senate career.

At star-studded galas, millions were raised, for Bill's new presidential library in Little Rock, and to furnish Hillary's gigantic new houses, the one in Chappaqua, New York, she used for her run for office and her new one on Washington's Embassy Row.

On January 3, Hillary was sworn in in the Senate chamber by a stoic Al Gore, and went that night to a gala at the Mayflower Hotel, followed by a farewell party for Bill the day after; a bigger party for the White House staff on January 6; and a huge gala at Madison Square Garden the day after, "a celebration attended by nearly three thousand supporters . . . with prayers, songs (by Jessye Norman and Billy Joel), and a reading by Toni Morrison. Al Gore gamely joined Hillary in reenacting the oath-of-office ceremony in front of the 'swinging, swaying, celebrity-studded, standing-ovation-flooded' gathering as Tipper looked on."

Where Ronald Reagan departed quickly and quietly after the swearing-in of his successor, the Clintons led a motorcade to Andrews Air Force base, where they held a noisy rally for thousands of friends and supporters that shared television time with the ceremonies for the incoming president. It was not until an hour and 40 minutes after they got there that, at last, they took off for New York.

It is now eight years since the time that Sally Bedell Smith takes leave of her story, and in many ways, little has changed. Al Gore has left the political scene, gained weight, grown rich, and become a cult hero for the Hollywood left: an odd turn of fate for a man who began his political life as both a defense expert and cultural conservative and was picked as a running mate by Bill Clinton largely because he had once been a hawk on Iraq. For the Clintons, however, much seems the same. Once again, a political partner of William J. Clinton is running for president, and once again Bill appears a mixed blessing, a man whose legacy is open to different judgments, a star whose magnitude sometimes overpowers the candidate but who sometimes wanders off-message, with dire results.

There were tensions in 2000 between Clinton and the Gore campaign people, when Bill tried to prod them in different directions; there are tensions now between Bill and some long-term Hillary loyalists. In 2000, Bill was called passive-aggressive in his relations with his vice president; now he is called the same thing in his relations with his former first lady. In 2000 it was all about him; now in 2008 it is much the same story. In 2000 Bill seemed split between wanting a Gore win to vindicate him and establish his legacy, and reluctant to see a one-time number two succeed and perhaps supersede him; now he seems to have much the same problem. He is a huge draw, at least to a Democratic primary audience, but he can either outshine Hillary, or be an embarrassment. People wonder aloud how much he really wants to be only one of two different Presidents Clinton.

Perhaps Hillary wonders herself.

In a sense, however, these problems were and are unavoidable, baked into the nature of the complex relations between both Gore and Clinton, and Bill and his wife. With a keen sense of self-preservation, Bill Clinton picked his two most important political partners to help himself function, to compensate for his frailties, to atone for his sins. Intuitive, seductive, empathetic, and sometimes inspired, but wholly deficient in focus and discipline, he sought out partners with focus and discipline, and orderly, literal, minds. They served his needs, in that they helped him to function; but as he had his failings, they too had theirs.

With their rigor and discipline went a lack of intuition and nuance—the *je ne sais quoi* that makes a political talent, and that no amount of effort and diligence can ever supply. Bill loved campaigning; Gore found it a struggle, and his torment was obvious. Hillary is an unhappy warrior—at best, a grim one—and her description of the anticipated evisceration of Barack Obama as the "fun" part was a chilling moment that surprised no one who has looked into *For Love of Politics*.

Unlike Bill, Gore and Hillary have no sense of how they appear to others, and seldom fail to make the wrong gesture—Hillary's cackle, the grating "caw" she unleashes in efforts at levity, is on a par with the sighs, eye-rolling, and other strange efforts at intimidation that helped Gore lose the election in the 2000 debates. With their conspicuous lack of political talents, neither Gore nor Hillary would ever have reached the top tier of candidates if they had not been elevated by being chosen by Clinton. But if they had been more graceful, and less pedantic and heavy-handed, they would not have been chosen, as they would not have supplied what Bill lacked.

It was a bargain that worked well for Bill, but ended in heartbreak for Gore, and may do the same thing for Hillary Clinton. This story is not over yet. ♦

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'The Battle of Trafalgar, as Seen from the Mizen Starboard Shrouds of the Victory, *1806' (1808)*

TATE, LONDON

Turner in Perspective

The British master who straddled old and new.

BY JOSEPH PHELAN

"So I am to become a nonentity, am I?" These words, attributed to the 76-year-old Joseph Mallord William Turner on his deathbed, offer a revelatory insight into the boiling ambition that fueled his long and controversial career. For over six decades, this lowborn painter worked furiously to establish and sustain his reputation as the greatest painter in Britain. As one walks through the 12 rooms of this stupendous exhibit, currently at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the largest ever in North America, one recognizes an artist whose imaginative vision and innovative techniques of light and color expanded artistic possibilities in the 19th century. Turner also had a remarkable "second life" in the mid-20th century when his late unfinished works were rediscovered in the heyday of the Abstract Expressionists, as well as by a host of experimental filmmakers.

J.M.W. Turner

Dallas Museum of Art,
February 10–May 18, 2008

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York,
July 1–September 21, 2008

J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851) was an unlikely candidate for the title of the greatest British painter of his age. His father was a barber and wigmaker who showed his precocious son's drawings in the window of his shop in Covent Garden. Soon after enrolling as a student at the Royal Academy in 1790, Turner recognized that garnering attention at the Academy's annual exhibition was a necessity if he was to rise from the ranks. From then on his ambition was inextricably bound up with the Academy's professed aim of developing a uniquely British school of painting. By 1802, at the age of 26, he was elected a full Royal Academician—the youngest member ever so admitted.

Five years after this honor, Turner sought out another: He became professor of perspective, in which capacity he delivered a course of lectures in most years during 1811-1828. The uneducated but intellectually curious Turner took pains to present his innovative ideas visually in diagrams. He retained a lifelong devotion to the Royal Academy, describing it at one point as the "institution to which I owe everything."

Although Turner first attained distinction with his precise architectural watercolors depicting the melancholy ruins of grand Gothic abbeys in all their "picturesque" variety, he knew that

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he must master the more traditional art of oil painting if he was to be taken seriously. This meant accepting the Academy's hierarchy of genres. History painting, with its resonant stories based on the Bible or such ancient writers as Homer and Virgil, was considered the most demanding art form both for the skills required and for the elevated moral teachings offered.

As we can see in the early rooms of the exhibit, Turner was amazingly quick to assimilate the lessons of the old masters Claude Lorraine and the Dutch marine painters, and to learn from (and outshine) his contemporaries such as John Constable. Nevertheless, he bristled at the Academy's denigration of landscape as a "mere" reproduction of appearances. His strategy was to imbue his canvases with heroic literary references and atmospheric effects that created their own sense of drama.

An early example, *Dolbadern Castle, North Wales* (1800), reveals a theatrically backlit castle set high up on a dark rocky terrain. In the bottom foreground, dwarfed by the mountain scenery above, we see two soldiers with a bound and kneeling prisoner who represents the 13th-century Welsh prince imprisoned in the castle by his brother. To make the landscape speak to the themes of liberty and servitude, Turner appended several lines of verse (possibly by himself) to the exhibit catalogue.

During the first decade of the 19th century, Turner attained his status as a leading member of the British school by painting thrilling and even terrifying scenes of nature's overwhelming force and grandeur. Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) had popularized the notion that such awesome and exhilarating scenes, when viewed from a safe distance, can lead to reflections on man's insignificance in the face of a vast and indifferent universe. Turner's churning seas and thunderous skies gave thrilling visual form to the Sublime as Burke interpreted it.

The grand rhetorical language of the Sublime, in turn, became a key aspect of Turner's effort to heighten the scope of his art by allowing him to approach the kinds of universal, instructive themes that were crucial to history painting's elevated status.

In *Snowstorm: Hannibal and His Army Crossing the Alps* (1812), the tail end of the Carthaginian army is being picked off by local tribesmen in the foreground while, in the far distance, a tiny figure on an elephant heads for the sunlit lowlands of Italy. All are dwarfed by the awe-inspiring setting and the overwhelming power of the snowstorm's vortex of destructive energy (an anticlassical compositional motif which the artist returned to throughout his career).

By this time, Turner was working on his own never-finished poem, "The Fallacies of Hope." From that epic he extracted verses which pointed to Hannibal's defeat in central Italy as the result of its dissipation and decline in moral fiber and martial virtue during its sojourn in the seductive Italian countryside.

During the first two decades of Turner's adult life, Britain was constantly at war with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and this deeply patriotic painter was preoccupied with the conflict which threatened the island nation. Of course, one of the decisive battles of the Napoleonic Wars was the naval victory at Trafalgar, off the coast of Spain, where the British defeated the combined French and Spanish fleets. Turner's two paintings celebrating the victory dominate one of the galleries. In *The Battle of Trafalgar, as Seen from the Mizen Starboard Shrouds of the Victory* (1806), he focuses on the moment when the victorious hero of the battle, Admiral Nelson, is felled by a sniper's bullet. Nelson lies on the deck of the ship, left of center. A bold compositional diagonal leads toward the right top of the canvas where the smoking gun of the French marksman, positioned high in the rigging of the French vessel, can be seen.

The Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805 (1823-1824), Turner's only royal commission, is a huge work more akin to a scene from a Hollywood epic. Turner celebrates the occasion but also shows the confusion which attends such victory in a sea battle. Moving closer, one notices in the foreground the devastating toll of the war through the desperation of the scores of men who are struggling for their lives in the waters churned by the battle action. They seem to be reaching out from the canvas in our direction, as if hoping there were some chance we could come to their assistance in their terrible plight.

On an October evening in his 60th year, Turner witnessed the devastating fire that destroyed the Houses of Parliament, the symbol of Britain's historical and political legacy of representative government. In dozens of sketches and watercolors depicting the disaster, some of which were surely composed on site, the artist saw the theme which he had brooded over all his life—the mighty power of nature's destructive forces—being acted out in front of him. At the same time, the combination of elements involved in a great conflagration such as this, where fire, water, and air swirled in a maelstrom of heat and light reflected on the water, appealed to Turner's aesthetic sensibilities.

The studies resulted in two oil paintings of the same name, *The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons, October 16, 1834* (1835), which presented the scene from different vantage points along the banks of the Thames. This particular exhibition marks the first time these astounding works in oil and watercolor have ever been exhibited. For this reason alone, a visit is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Over the decades, Turner's work became increasingly experimental, and as it did so, he left many of his admirers surprised, provoked, and bewildered. There was always controversy about his rough handling, high-keyed color, and sketchiness. Among his detractors was the essayist William Hazlitt, who observed that Turner's later work consisted of "tinted steam" and "paintings of nothing and very like."

But Turner was fortunate in his champions. No less an expert judge than Alfred Lord Tennyson called Turner the Shakespeare of painting. The artist clearly encouraged such a comparison, going so far as to claim he was born on the same day as Shakespeare and painting, in *Juliet and her Nurse* (1836), one of his most controversial works. Turner sets the scene in Venice, with a pan-

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oramic view of St. Mark's, when anyone with even a passing acquaintance with the story of Romeo and Juliet will recall that it is "In fair Verona where we lay our scene."

The error was duly noted by hostile critics, one of whom suggested this was evidence of the aging Turner's senility. That, in turn, aroused the young John Ruskin to rise to Turner's defense in a letter. The letter was never sent, but Ruskin went on to write the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843), a brilliant defense of the truth of Turner's landscapes which transformed the way readers in Victorian England and America looked at visual art.

As early as the 1820s the always-strategic Turner began to prepare for his posthumous reputation by writing in his will a gift to the nation of all his unsold works, with instructions that several were to be hung next to the Old Masters who had inspired them.

One of his works in the bequest, *Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus—Homer's Odyssey* (1829), was described by Ruskin as the central work of Turner's career. Ulysses stands aloft on his ship loudly mocking the one-eyed Cyclops he has blinded while his men roar their approval. As is typical with Turner, the ostensible subject is dwarfed by the real subject, which is the luminous aurora burning through the clouds in one of the most beautiful and magnificent sunrises in all of art. In this morning light we can see the birth of the Hudson River School in America and the Impressionism of Monet and Pissarro in France. And as is so often the case throughout his amazing career, Turner is forging a modern path while he participates fully in the great tradition of those who preceded him.

By leaving his paintings to the nation, Turner was implicitly laying his claim as a turning point in the history of art, in that his work was distinguished by both its absorption of, and improvement upon, the work of his great predecessors. Moreover, he never lost the 18th-century belief in the social responsibility of art: that painting could encompass the whole range of human achievement, and offer useful lessons to those with eyes to see. ♦

Richard Turnbull

ST. ALBANS' DIOCESAN EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP

House Divided

An Anglican evangelical speaks. **BY J. ROBERT WRIGHT**

This is the book to read for those who want to understand better the evangelical fervor that has overtaken so much of the Church of England in recent years, and that now seems to be a major influence upon the statements Rowan Williams, the archbishop of Canterbury, has decided to make, and the stands that he takes, in the current controversies about human sexuality and the literal meaning of the Bible.

Anglican and Evangelical?
by Richard Turnbull
Continuum, 178 pp., $19.95

Richard Turnbull is the controversial, aggressive, and defiant principal of Wycliffe Hall at Oxford, one of the leading theological colleges of the conservative evangelical tradition within the Church of England. His uncompromising stands on controversial issues have already brought complaints from the alumni, demands for his resignation, and other strong murmurs of support or disapproval from around the Anglican world.

J. Robert Wright, St. Mark's Professor of Church History at the General Theological Seminary in New York, and historiographer of the Episcopal Church, is the author of the forthcoming Companion to the Venerable Bede.

Turnbull is a scholar and historian, but of a decidedly evangelical flavor, and not given to making polite overtures of peaceful coexistence with other points of view. For example, he is known to have said in a speech that 95 percent of Britons now face the prospect of hell because of their failure to follow the Christian faith (as he sees it).

In fairness to him, it must be acknowledged that he doesn't quite say that in this book. Nor is *Anglican and Evangelical?* particularly scholarly, based upon extensive research in original sources. It is, rather, a book that intelligent laypeople can understand and even engage with their emotions as they read through its challenging pages. The evangelical point of view, its author points out, is held by probably some 70 percent of persons studying for ordination in the Church of England today.

Turnbull does not seem to know very much about the Episcopal Church, apart from the fact that he obviously doesn't like it. There are the occasional sideswipes against the church, which he chides for drawing the veil over its Protestant heritage and for departing from traditional biblical faith in favor of

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liberal Protestantism in such matters as Trinitarian doctrine and Christology.

(The only example he gives is the current presiding bishop's opening sermon of 2006 which made reference to "our mother Jesus giving birth to a new creation"—a phrase that might as well have come from St. Anselm or Dame Julian of Norwich.)

Also, surprisingly, he doesn't seem to know much, or at least he does not tell us much, about the wider world of the global south and Anglican provinces such as Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda, which are now so heavily influenced by the evangelical movement in England and are correspondingly strident in opposition to what they perceive as liberal tendencies within the Episcopal Church.

Turnbull's overall narrative could have been strengthened by more ample references and greater firsthand knowledge, but as an Episcopalian, I have to say that I was not offended by his occasional anti-American comments. I was also surprised that he was not more critical of more liberal views on human sexuality, which occupy very little space here.

Turnbull tells us at the outset that his purpose is to explain and describe what it means to be both Anglican and evangelical, and that for him "evangelical" will be the noun and "Anglican" will be the adjective. This is a fair perspective, given the viewpoint from which he writes, even though there were times when he seemed to be using the term "Anglican" itself to mean only "English"—as when he speaks of the Anglican canons and the Anglican Declaration of Assent, or in the excellent fourth chapter where he writes of English Anglican approaches to society and culture—whereas at other times he seemed to be using it without geographical reference at all.

He does admit that Anglicanism can be defined in confessional or doctrinal terms, but also in terms that are more sociological, more experiential, or more structural.

Having differentiated in these ways, he next proceeds, as any good historian would do, to sketch out the Celtic and Roman strands in early Anglican Christianity, factors that were described (not without bias) as early as the Venerable Bede in the seventh century. Turnbull then leaps forward, as only a dedicated child of the Reformation might do, straight ahead to John Wycliffe and the Lollards of the 14th century, if for no other reason, he says, than to show that "there was a popular Protestantism prior to the Reformation."

The real beginnings of the evangelical movement he traces to John Wesley in 1738, but his attempts to distinguish its key terms and characteristics could have been better delineated. He does succeed in showing that there has been, and remains, much diversity in the evangelical movement, and he affirms that it is not above self-criticism, as in such examples as a loss of urgency in the mission of the gospel, a certain tendency to institutionalization, and an endemic cultural anti-Catholicism.

Towards the end, Turnbull gives what seems to be his own brief summary when he makes this assertion:

> The Anglican Evangelical tradition is thus both Reformed and renewed. Theologically and historically it represents a moderate Calvinism that successfully holds together the Reformed doctrinal heritage of Anglicanism with the Evangelical spiritual heritage of conversion and evangelism. Theologically also it holds the long-standing developed Anglican emphasis on the incarnation in creative tension with the atonement.

In traversing this volume's wide-ranging pages, I did note a number of emphases and observations that one would find much more commonly held in the evangelical wing of the Church of England than in the Episcopal Church, differences that, when agitated, exert their influence on global-south Anglicanism in those four large African provinces, and can easily stir up more biblicistic feelings of suspicion against the Episcopal Church and some other parts of the Anglican world. (This is especially true if the archbishop of Canterbury himself is susceptible to these influences, and has not the time or skill to negotiate or contextualize them.)

Such evangelical emphases include a number of assertions: that the difference between a priest and a bishop is only one of function and not of order; that there are not necessarily three distinct orders of ordained ministry, although evangelicals "do embrace the episcopal form of church government"; that the Elizabethan Settlement did not represent a *via media* between Rome and Geneva; and that the original 39 Articles and the 1552 Prayer Book (not that of 1549 or 1662) represent the doctrinal standard of Anglicanism.

Then there is the assertion that the Enlightenment, with its liberalism, its doubting of revelation, and its emphasis on "the certainty of uncertainty," distorted the truth of the Gospel; that the Oxford Movement of the 19th century represented a significant discontinuity in the historical understanding of the Church of England; that the triad of Scripture, tradition, and reason merely represents "a train able to stop at every station and always add one more carriage"; and that in much of Anglicanism the patristic period has been overemphasized and the Reformation devalued.

Turnbull also suggests that a greater priority in ecumenism should be given to "the truth of the gospel" than to visible or institutional or even sacramental unity; that agreed or common statements in ecumenism tend to obscure what is really important; that in Anglican ecumenism there has been too much emphasis upon unity with Rome and not enough upon "new, emerging and growing expressions of church life" such as Pentecostalism and black churches; that "the entire trajectory of biblical teaching in respect of homosexual practice is negative"; and that presidency at the celebration of the Lord's Supper should not be restricted to ordained persons.

These characteristic emphases of Anglican evangelicals surface at various points in *Anglican and Evangelical?* and most of them, if accompanied by charity and a certain impartiality, can be understood as points of conflict that help explain the growing discontent of many global-south Anglicans with their more liberal, affluent sisters and brothers in North America. The global-south Anglicans are fueled with growing convictions from English Anglican evangelicals, such as Richard Turnbull, who helps us here to understand them—whether or not one agrees with them on all points.♦

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Lynchburg, Virginia, 1950

The New Dominion

A look at Virginia since, as well as before, Appomattox.

BY NELSON D. LANKFORD

The traditional lineaments of Virginia history are familiar to most Americans. Who does not know at least an anecdote or two about Pocahontas and Captain John Smith, colonial Williamsburg, the Founding Fathers, or Robert E. Lee and the Confederacy? They dominate the state's story. Indeed, for much of the 20th century and beyond, Virginia history seemed to end at Appomattox.

To historians, the tale is more complex, and more contested, than these celebrated icons of Virginia's past encompass. Unfortunately, we have lacked a vehicle for conveying that richer narrative beyond the often self-referential confines of the academy. Now, in *Cradle of America*, we have a compact account that distills and interprets for a general audience the breadth of recent scholarship on Virginia's history.

Cradle of America
Four Centuries of Virginia History
by Peter Wallenstein
Kansas, 476 pp., $29.95

In fact, this past year we had two brand new comprehensive works. In addition to the volume under review, there is also *Old Dominion, New Commonwealth: A History of Virginia, 1607-2007* (Virginia, 432 pp., $29.95), a splendid narrative by the Hampden-Sydney historian Ronald Heinemann and three colleagues. This embarrassment of riches came about because 2007 marked the 400th year since the founding of Jamestown—much to the delight of the state's tourism machine—and historians seized a golden opportunity to contribute their own perspective.

Wallenstein has deliberately crafted a back-loaded account. That is, by design he devotes more pages to the more recent half of Virginia history than to the earlier period. This approach inverts the usual treatment. For too long, he suggests, stories of colonization, the heyday of Virginia's hegemony in the early republic, and the Civil War have dominated the storytelling. These elements take their place in *Cradle of America* but in context with much more.

Within the constraints of relating four centuries of recorded history, the author does a commendable job of enlivening the big themes with thumbnail sketches of representative, flesh-and-blood Virginians. And he populates those sketches with many obscure individuals, not just luminaries. Like the sketches, a generous sprinkling of sidebars allows him to inject excerpts from important texts without cluttering or slowing the brisk narrative. In addition, his captions to the many illustrations deserve praise on their own. Taken together, they provide their own idiosyncratic history of the state (though placing the photograph of Edgar Allan Poe in the 20th century takes quirkiness a bit too far).

Wallenstein frankly states at the outset that his major themes will be political power, racial identity, and public education. The first two are standard, the third something of a surprise. It could be argued that economic development and religion far outrank the third element of this trinity. In fairness, the author deftly follows the thorny trail of disestablishing the Anglican Church after the Revolution, though he might have given more scope to the evangelical movement of the same era as a shaper of Virginians' sensibilities.

Wallenstein is especially good at describing the long, convoluted growth of slavery, which coexisted with indentured servitude in the early years before becoming the dominant form of labor. Some change came after independence, when a temporary liberalization allowed owners to manumit their slaves privately. This led to an increase in the number of free black Virginians.

Wallenstein makes the centrality of slavery clear in his discussion of the three-fifths compromise, without which there would have been no United States Constitution. (For purposes of apportioning seats in the House of Representatives, and therefore influencing

Nelson D. Lankford, editor of the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, *the quarterly journal of the Virginia Historical Society, is the author, most recently, of* Cry Havoc! The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861.

GETTY IMAGES

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the makeup of the Electoral College, each slave counted as three-fifths of a person.) That compromise had a long reach and even complicated politics beyond the Civil War: "So in death as in life, southern slavery roiled national politics," he writes.

Wallenstein emphasizes chronic east-west tension as a main undercurrent in Virginia's story. This, too, had much to do with slavery and persisted from the time settlers first moved west across the mountains through the Civil War. Wealth and slaves concentrated in eastern Virginia, which jealously guarded its hold on political influence, to the growing irritation of the population beyond the Alleghenies, which owned comparatively few slaves. Just as the three-fifths compromise on the national level enhanced the power of slave owners, slaves boosted the representation of eastern Virginia. To make matters worse from the perspective of the westerners, taxation fell unequally on white Virginians. It penalized those in the west whose property was in land, rather than those in the east, whose wealth derived largely from owning human property, which was more lightly taxed.

If the 1830 state convention had heeded cries for fairer representation for western Virginians, the outcome of the debate over slavery two years later, after Nat Turner's bloody insurrection, just might have turned out differently. As it was, the continuing sectional divide within Virginia fueled the break-up of the state during the secession crisis of 1861. For decades thereafter, the new state of West Virginia squabbled with its parent over how to divide the prewar state debt.

When he turns to conditions after the war, Wallenstein answers the familiar question about change versus continuity *vis-à-vis* antebellum times with a concise couplet: "Whites tended to see far too much change. Blacks saw too much continuity."

As might be expected, given his stated intention to make race one of the three themes of his book, Wallenstein devotes considerable attention to the modern civil rights movement. He is especially good in limning the antecedents to *Brown* v. *Board of Education* and demonstrating how the movement for equal rights gathered steam long before 1954.

Despite his interest in recent times, though, he writes surprisingly little about the modern urban underclass and attendant problems. Although he commendably does not let older Virginia history overshadow the recent past, this balanced treatment still does not quite give the economic story enough scope. Take the Great Depression and World War II: Together, they transformed Virginia and integrated it, and the rest of the South, into the nation for the first time since the Civil War. But they rate barely 25 pages out of the 400 in *Cradle of America*.

Virginians are sometimes accused of holding too expansive a view of their state's importance. There's a good reason why an apocryphal quip about early land claims, attributed to William Byrd II, stays in circulation: "In the beginning, all America was Virginia." But the title of Wallenstein's book does not exaggerate the state's role in the formation of the nation. Given this title, it is perhaps an irony that the author prefers to tell the later story, when Virginia exerted less influence on the national stage, rather than dwell on those earlier years. Even so, he presents both halves of the story well. Readers can learn much about each part, both the settling and founding of the state and nation, and the century-and-a-half since Appomattox, when Virginia languished as a parochial backwater before rejoining the larger society in the mid-20th century. ♦

Country's Voice

The story of Nashville's WSM. **BY BEVERLY KEEL**

WSM, home of the venerable Grand Ole Opry, is the most important radio station in the history of country music.

There's a cliché in Nashville that says, "It all begins with a song." But if that tune can't be heard by the public, not much else will follow the promising start. Thanks to WSM, that wasn't a problem for country stars such as Roy Acuff, Loretta Lynn, and Marty Robbins because the clear-channel station's airwaves eventually reached as far as New Zealand, Canada, Cuba, and Hawaii. And as Craig Havighurst notes, WSM helped lift country music from a regional, class-specific folk art to the edge of national commercial viability.

Air Castle of the South
WSM and the Making of Music City
by Craig Havighurst
Illinois, 320 pp., $29.95

In an era of oversaturated entertainment options, it's difficult to grasp the importance of radio in the pretelevision lives of rural Americans. (Roy Acuff once said, "I don't care how poor you were, you found some way to own a radio.") The Nashville AM station was launched by the National Life and Accident Insurance Company in 1925 to promote its slogan "We Shield Millions"—hence WSM—and generate goodwill among its customers and the community. Not only did the station boost sales of insurance policies, but it indelibly shaped country music and the city of Nashville, which is still known by the "Music City USA" moniker created by a WSM announcer.

This influence came, in large part, through its massive broadcast reach, but also by the achievements of WSM employees and alumni, including legendary producer Owen Bradley, music

Beverly Keel, who teaches about the recording industry at Middle Tennessee State University, writes about country music for The Tennessean.

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publisher Jack Stapp, and media personality Ralph Emery. Havighurst says bluegrass was largely invented in front of WSM's microphones and promoted through WSM's branding.

Without these WSM-affiliated leaders, who formed Nashville's first recording studios, record label, publishing companies, and talent agency, one of the nation's multi-billion-dollar music centers might have evolved outside of Middle Tennessee, leaving Nashville to emerge as another Charlotte, but without all that bank money. WSM made Nashville a show town.

WSM also created the Disc Jockey Convention (now known as Country Radio Seminar) and Fan Fair, now dubbed CMA Music Festival, which attracts thousands of fans to Nashville each year to meet their favorite stars. In the 1970s, WSM also built the Opryland USA theme park and hotel and the current Opry House. In the 1960s and '70s, WSM's overnight DJ Ralph Emery was so powerful that he created national hits by adding them to his playlist.

In his colorful account, Havighurst, a music journalist, chronicles the birth, success, and near death of WSM, which was in danger of converting from a classic country to a sports talk format in 2002 until protesters, such as George Jones and Vince Gill, added their voices to the cacophony of sign-waving, horn-honking protesters determined to save this cultural institution. WSM is a story of visionaries and at least one technological genius, Jack DeWitt. WSM's tower, still in use today, was the tallest in North America when built in 1932. Less than a decade later, WSM had the first commercial FM station on the air in the United States, and by the 1960s, its executives were exploring cable television. During radio's most powerful years (1935 until the '50s) WSM originated numerous shows for national networks.

This is a vital book in the canons of country music history, but it's also a delightful read because the corporate growth and technological advances are peppered with stories such as Ernest Tubb's arrest for firing a gun in the National Life lobby and Hank Williams's call from jail. Havighurst treats WSM as if it's a character as rich and important as those it made famous, and he recreates the intangible studio moments that evaporate into thin air after reaching listeners' homes.

Bill Monroe, 1940

GETTY IMAGES

Of course, WSM didn't initially play only country music. It embraced all forms of music, especially during the 1940s-60s, its most influential years. Its live, in-studio orchestras were accompanied by Dinah Shore, Snooky Lanson, and the Anita Kerr singers. Band leader Francis Craig, who wrote "Near You," Nashville's first million-seller, was a popular WSM personality. It was this sophisticated image that Nashville's bluebloods wanted to portray to the world, not the embarrassing image of overall-clad, twangy-sounding hillbillies. When an orchestra league held its convention in Nashville in the late 1950s, the conductors asked that Chet Atkins perform. But when he arrived at the prestigious venue, he was forced to enter through the kitchen. Even by the end of the next decade, when country music was earning impressive profits, many Nashville denizens didn't celebrate its success: "The business community was happy to sell you a car, but they didn't want their daughter to marry your son if you were in the music industry," Havighurst is told.

Profit wasn't always the overriding motive at WSM; quality was. WSM officials considered themselves patrons of music. But as often happens in the corporate world, good things must come to an end. WSM-TV was sold to Gillett Broadcasting in Wisconsin in 1981, a move that raised about $40 million of the $60 million necessary to launch The Nashville Network (TNN). In 1982 National Life, which included WSM radio, the Opry, Opryland, and TNN, was purchased by another insurance company. And the following year those properties were purchased by the Gaylord Broadcasting Co. While the era of local ownership was gone, Ed Gaylord loved country music and gave local management considerable discretion.

Gaylord's country music empire grew in size, power, and influence. It became Tennessee's largest employer, and by the end of the 1980s, TNN was the nation's seventh largest cable network. Gaylord bought the Country Music Television video channel in 1991, and his timing was impeccable: Country music's sales and popularity were at an all-time high with artists such as Garth Brooks, Reba McEntire, and Clint Black. "Country music took off in the '90s *because* we controlled both TNN and CMT," says Gaylord's David Hall. "We were *the* driving force in country music." But the glory days didn't last long. In 1997 Gaylord sold TNN and CMT to Westinghouse, which was bought by CBS, which was bought by Viacom.

TNN ultimately became the testosterone-fueled Spike TV. CMT is now run by the folks at MTV. Gaylord's new regime bulldozed Opryland to make way for a shopping mall, a horrible mistake that devastated Nashville's tourism industry and delivered an emotional blow to the city. "In the turbulence, WSM, the country music station of the century and the accidental architect of Music City, would be taken to the brink of extinction," writes Havighurst.

After struggling with its own identity, when it essentially sounded like every other contemporary country station, WSM-AM found its sound by century's end, embracing country, Western, swing, and bluegrass music from the 1940s on. The format, a country purist's fantasy come true, reinvigorated the radio staff.

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But experience should have taught that these good times would soon end as well. A new Gaylord regime announced in 2002 it was turning WSM into a news/talk/sports station; community protests, which drew coverage in the *New York Times*, convinced management to keep WSM country. But Gaylord cut its budget and staff before selling WSM-FM to Cumulus Media in 2003. WSM-AM was moved out of its freestanding office and into the basement of an Opry building. The studio is now inside the Opryland Hotel.

Havighurst ponders how country music's most important radio station will fulfill its destiny in the new century: "In a time when traditional country music fans are giving up on Top 40 commercial country radio, WSM with its international Web presence might be positioned as the on-air, online authority on country music worldwide," he writes. In this swift-changing industry, will WSM-AM become a fond relic of yesteryear, or reinvent itself as an in-demand musical showplace in the global marketplace? Like so many songs on Music Row, the last verse remains unfinished. ♦

Romantic Teuton

Slobodan Milosevic's favorite novelist goes postmodern.

BY MICHAEL MCDONALD

If you've been tapping your foot impatiently for the next "great" postmodernist novel—hierarchies being bad, the quote marks are *de rigueur*—brace yourself: The wait is over! The book is *Crossing the Sierra de Gredos*, the author is the Austrian writer Peter Handke, and midwife to the enterprise is Krishna Winston, who translated the novel, which appeared in German in 2002 as *Der Bildverlust oder Durch die Sierra de Gredos*.

Crossing the Sierra de Gredos
A Novel
by Peter Handke
Translated by Krishna Winston
Farrar, Straus and Giroux,
480 pp., $30

Bildverlust, as Mark Twain noted in his famous essay "The Awful German Language," is one of those "compound words constructed by the [German] writer on the spot and not to be found in any dictionary." It means something like "image-loss." It's a concept central to Handke's concerns here, but a word guaranteed to leave the prospective book buyer nonplussed. Hence, one assumes, its elimination from the English title.

Michael McDonald, a writer in Washington, is writing a biography of Curzio Malaparte.

Readers of THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be familiar with Handke from his public engagements during and following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. Throughout the 1990s, Handke added his voice to those on the hard left who maintained that Europe and America had contrived the "so-called humanitarian intervention" in the Balkans for the benefit of Western bankers.

"Everybody says Sept. 11 is a magic date," Handke has declared:

> And I say: And what happened on March 24? Ah! Nobody knows that on March 24, 1999, in the middle of Europe, an independent, sovereign State was attacked by awful bombs without any law, where such and such number of people—let's not quibble over numbers—civilians, children died for nothing and nothing. What happened on March 24, 1999? That should be written in neon letters above Europe. Every evening . . . What happened? These shitty Europeans who today want nothing but money and disco and video and Internet, they should learn: What happened on March 24, 1999? What happened? A line was crossed that has thrown the world into the negative.

Handke damned the NATO bombing campaign to end Serbian ethnic cleansing, damned the trials of Serbian war criminals in the Hague, and damned what he termed the "Fourth Reich" of Western journalists who reported on such things as Serbian ethnic cleansing and Serbian war criminals. Praise he reserved for Slobodan Milosevic—"a man who defended his people"—at whose funeral Handke spoke in 2006.

But the considerable reputation Handke commands has less to do with politics than with his undeniable talent as a writer. Handke has a keen ear for exposing the clichés that cloud people's thinking. And when he's in form, his ability to describe nature scenes is such that it has reminded many a Continental critic of the magnificent landscape scenes limned in classic German prose by the 19th-century Austrian writer Adalbert Stifter.

From the start of his career in the 1960s, Handke has been seen as one of the most important German-speaking writers active today. Indeed, when in 2004 the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* published a list of the 50 greatest German novels of the 20th century, an early Handke, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* (1970), was on it. Many, myself included, also find his slim memoir of the life and suicide of his mother, *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams* (1972), to be a minor masterpiece. Now in his mid-sixties, he has received every important German-language literary prize.

Handke's early novels and plays tend to be slimmed-down, angst-ridden, and highly experimental affairs. He once stated that his "primary literary intent is the destruction of predetermined systems and concepts of reality." In other words, out with linear plots, mimetic narrative and a concern with social insights into human nature, and in with the irrationality of human consciousness, the instability of language, and a relentless focus on the act of writing itself.

While in his twenties, Handke proudly proclaimed that he wanted

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nothing to do with politics. The title of a 1967 essay, "*Ich bin ein Bewohner des Elfenbeinturms*" ("I Live in an Ivory Tower") seemed to say it all. But if your starting point is that human language is incapable of portraying reality truthfully, you will be suspicious, to say the least, of those who believe otherwise. And suspicion is apt to grow into hostility if you begin to believe that the powers that be are relying upon a dictatorial "discursive regime" to bound debate and channel perceptions.

In retrospect, Handke's political radicalization was all but complete by the end of the 1980s, a decade in which he delved into Heidegger and emerged ever more committed to demonstrating how language systems distort perception and how Reason is a mechanism of social repression.

But as if to prove, yet again, the time-honored truth that progressive politics makes for poor art, Handke's avid embrace of postmodernist "textual politics" caused his writing to suffer as he abandoned what little storytelling impulse he had previously displayed and began to churn out disorienting meta-fictions designed to focus his readers' attention on objects themselves rather than one's preconceived notions of them. But however metaphysically sound such ruminations may be from a Heideggerian Being-in-the-World perspective, one thing is equally clear: Boy, are they boring!

Which brings us to *Crossing the Sierra de Gredos*. What is it about? Charitably considered, the novel is something of a picaresque questing tale. The protagonist, an unnamed female banker who lives on the outskirts of a great, unnamed northwestern river port city in Europe, has decided to undertake a journey to the Sierra de Gredos mountains in Spain.

The woman banker, who goes by a number of different designations—the heroine, the adventurer, Odysseus in the shape of a woman—lives in what we are repeatedly told is "a transitional period" at some vague point in the not-too-distant future when the first manned spacecraft has landed on Mars and everyone speaks a single language, also unnamed, although my guess is that it can only be that most linear and conformity-inducing of tongues, English.

Peter Handke, 2006

STR / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

Handke scatters countless details throughout the book about the woman banker. We learn, *inter alia*, that she was born in eastern Germany into a Serbian-Arab family; that she has a daughter who has disappeared; that she has a brother who was imprisoned as a "terrorist" (quote marks, in the original, meant to highlight the arrant nonsense of such a designation).

We are also told that the woman banker has many enemies as a result of her work as a "world champion of global finance" (again set off in quotes in the book to demonstrate yet another journalistic cliché). But she is "never afraid of anything." Oh, and by the way, in her youth she starred in a film set in the Middle Ages.

Do the details of the heroine's life ever coalesce to form a convincing, fully imagined character? No. Does it matter? Not to Handke. The protagonist, as well as all the characters she encounters in her journey, exists merely as a mouthpiece for his worldview.

In this regard, undoubtedly the two most important things we learn about the woman banker are, first, that "what she was aiming for was a sense of life independent of society and all systems" and, second, that "she had been one of the pioneers of new ways of life."

How she had pioneered a new way of life is never clearly stated. But it seems to have something to do with her ability to receive powerful, unmediated images of places she has visited that protect her from the usual cant one finds in society, and provide her with a powerful sense of being alive. (Think of a blending of Joycean "epiphanies" and Proust's notion of "involuntary memory." Postmodernist writers are nothing if not shameless about ripping off the ideas of their precursors.)

What kinds of images? Well, any kind. As the protagonist explains, the images just turn up randomly to protect her: "Poof! A deserted sandy playground by a canal in Ghent . . . Poof! The diminutive library along the city wall of Avila . . . " And so on. Many of the protective images seem to be the product of her visits to the Sierra de Gredos.

And so the purpose of the journey is to replenish her stock of images? Well, yes and no. In the rest of the world the types of images that she is living off are dying out—so much so that it has become a "problem of epochal proportions."

Fortunately for humanity, the protagonist is an altruist. "Over the years she had often felt the urge to spread the word of her remarkable and memorable encounters with the shooting images, or image showers. . . . She had to reveal what she knew. . . . The moment had come to tell the world!" And so she has signed a contract with an author living in La Mancha, "to write a book about her undertakings and her adventures"—which, of course, turns out to be the book in the reader's hands.

Why not just write the book herself? That would be too simple. Plus, by hiring an author to write the book for her, both the woman banker and the author can address the reader directly and thereby gum up the narrative drive in an exquisitely postmodernist fashion.

For example, the protagonist can explicitly tell the author (and us): "Do not be afraid to let something contradictory appear now and then in these pages." And so when it does, the reader knows not to worry about it. The author in La Mancha can then write sentences

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such as these: "She climbed down, down, down, for an hour? For two? For a half day?" "She stayed in Hondareda. . . . How long? For hours? Days?" It doesn't matter.

You might think having two narrators was confusing enough. But there's always room for more. Various characters from reporters and journalists to stonemasons and hotel clerks grab the narrative limelight. Handke himself also feels the need to intrude now and then, over both of their heads, addressing the Reader directly as "Dear Reader" or inserting small rants and then concluding with "End of Message."

And why not, if it helps one to understand how Handke thinks writing is a fraud?

Thrown into the mix are his usual animadversions against clichés—some of which, for example, when he attacks expressions such as "without a doubt" (when there should be doubt) or the word "dialogue" which the protagonist hears "constantly crackl[ing] from all channels," are not half bad. But then, as usual, he goes over the precipice by inveighing against historians who issue books in "the carefully cultivated tone of historical objectivity" and journalists who believe "eyewitness accounts" and think that "reporting" means that events can happen only "this way and no other way." Some of the great writers of the last century may have been journalists—Hemingway, Orwell, Koestler, Silone—but to Handke, reporting is nothing other than a swindle.

As the woman banker's quest continues, she travels through mountains and towns, village fairs, and hotels, all described in a flat, film-treatment way that makes each scene seem like a one-dimensional Potemkin construction lacking depth. And at each such location, new cartoon characters are introduced to recite half-baked stories. But one would be wrong to view Handke's novel as little more than a postmodernist reworking of scenes in Chaucer, Boccaccio, and Cervantes. There is a political edge to the tale which becomes clearer as the heroine makes her way to the Sierra de Gredos.

For there she discovers "a tribe" of refugees that the rest of the world is about to wage war with. These people are refugees from all over the world. They have had it with the flashy, corrupting images they have been fed and they have decided to go it alone. They have made a deliberate choice to be separate. And you will not be surprised to learn that they have constructed a true Marxist utopia where "the brutal distinction between sinister winners and wretched losers" no longer obtains.

Needless to say, this group has aroused worldwide indignation with its new "existential experiment." As a result, the rest of the world now seems intent on wiping the enclave "off the face of the earth." War will soon be declared, disguised as "peace operations" or perhaps as "love action."

In sum, Handke has surpassed himself, having written a Chomskyite fairy tale for the remnants of the pro-Milosevic left. The seductions of a media-dominated mass culture have attained hegemony. And for the sin of trying to disentangle themselves from power's omnivorous maw—from the totally administered world Theodor Adorno warned us about—to engage in their alternative cultural practices, the refugees face war which, just as in the Balkans, will be waged under the guise of "human rights."

Krishna Winston was undoubtedly right in dropping *Bildverlust* from the English title. Would that she could have also eliminated the many slack, graceless, and meandering sentences that comprise this bloated tome. But if she had, one would have to construct the word "book-loss" to describe the precious little that remained. ♦

Aaron Sorkin's War

Hollywood misconstrues the Cold War—again.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

In *Charlie Wilson's War*, a Democratic member of the House decides to do what he can to aid the Afghan rebels fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. It turns out that what he can do is plenty, because of his position on two congressional subcommittees. He helps engineer an increase in funding from $5 million to $500 million, and teams up with CIA analysts and covert operatives to determine what weaponry the rebels need and how to get it to them. In every way, he is successful. The rebels win.

Charlie Wilson's War
Directed by Mike Nichols

Charlie Wilson's War is based, as they say, on a true story, though it inflates the importance of its likeably raffish title character. That isn't really a problem; this is a movie, after all, and it stars Tom Hanks, and if Tom Hanks is going to play a relatively unknown congressman from Texas, you can be sure the congressman secretly saved the world. Considering how much it gets right, *Charlie Wilson's War* can be forgiven this excess. As an inside peek at the workings of the Capitol Hill sausage factory, it's easily the best thing of its kind since *Advise and Consent*—far more accurate about the ways of Washington than its screenwriter Aaron Sorkin's account of the inner life of the White House on the *West Wing* television show.

Like *Advise and Consent*, this movie actually seems to have been made in 1962. Director Mike Nichols made the peculiar but surprisingly funky decision

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to photograph his film in the lecherous manner of sniggering adult comedies of the 1960s, with groovy young women shaking their tail feathers and doing belly dances and pouffing their hair.

The point seems to be to let us view life through the desiccated eyes of Charlie Wilson, lecher of legend. Fair enough. Still, it's been decades since we've seen a tracking shot of a comely secretary's swaying tush and swinging ponytail as she carries an important note down a hallway in a movie hungering for Oscars. If the camera had swung around to show us that the actress in question was Kim Novak in her prime, I would not have been surprised. (In fact, the actress is the It Girl of the moment, Amy Adams, who must have shrewdly calculated that it would help her career to show a little kittenish sexiness.) Usually, you have to tune into Turner Classic Movies to see this kind of pre-feminist objectification.

The movie has to leer, because Hanks won't. There's a lot of talk about how Wilson is a scotch-swilling, coke-snorting sexual reprobate, but we don't actually see him getting any action. *Charlie Wilson's War* begins with Hanks lounging in a Caesars Palace hot tub surrounded by strippers, but he's so implicitly heroic an actor by now that the Jacuzzi water seems to bead on his chest as though it is unworthy of touching his noble skin. We see him invite a randy young pot-smoking woman to his Arlington apartment—this being a Sorkin screenplay, she is, of course, the daughter of a prudish evangelical Christian—but she passes out before they climb the stairs to his boudoir. He calls his staffers "jailbait," but he doesn't lay a finger on any of them. The only woman we see him sleeping with is Julia Roberts, who is (a) 40 years old, (b) a star commensurate with Hanks and therefore an equal, and (c) seduces him rather than the other way around. We see him throwing out bottles of whisky from an overflowing garbage can, but we don't see him drunk.

He is far more in his element dressing down a recalcitrant CIA station chief in Islamabad, wandering agitated through an Afghan refugee camp as he takes in the enormity of the crisis engendered by the Soviet invasion, or humorously getting his way with his congressional colleagues. He watches footage of Soviet misdeeds, and cries. He calls Julia Roberts, who has married somebody else, and cries. This is a movie about a flawed character whose flaws are airbrushed right before our eyes. And we don't care, because who wants to think anything but the best of Tom Hanks?

Tom Hanks

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The real problem with *Charlie Wilson's War* is that there is little conflict and less plot. Nobody puts up a fight against Charlie Wilson and his gang of anti-Soviet activists, except for a few bloodless WASPs around the CIA who are entirely undone by a ragtag band of ethnic "street agents"—the proletariat of the intelligence business—led by an unshaven, foul-mouthed Philip Seymour Hoffman. (Hoffman walks away with the picture because, unlike Hanks, he feels free to take unabashed joy in playing a reprobate.)

With no real antagonist but the far-off and faceless Soviet Union, *Charlie Wilson's War* is a chronicle of success foretold. It's nice, and even at this late date actually quite amazing, to hear unabashed anti-Communist, anti-Soviet talk pouring from the mouths of the characters in this most Hollywood of Hollywood productions. But while some of Sorkin's fast talk about "commie bastards" is an accurate rendering of the rueful self-mockery that characterized the best and most serious anti-Soviet activists, the movie gets one thing entirely wrong.

It is clear from the very beginning of *Charlie Wilson's War* that the goal of the movie's good guys in fighting Soviet dominion over Afghanistan is nothing less than the defeat of the Soviets, the collapse of the Berlin Wall, and the destruction of the Soviet Union itself. Julia Roberts says as much in a speech her character delivers in 1981, according to the movie's timeline.

But that is ridiculous. There wasn't a serious person alive in 1981 who actually thought the Afghan rebels would defeat the Soviets on the battlefield, the way they did, or that the Empire would collapse within a decade, the way it did. In the movie, Charlie Wilson becomes enraged when a CIA man tells him the U.S. goal in Afghanistan is to pin the Soviets down the way we were pinned down in Vietnam. But that was *precisely* the point of supporting the rebels, and what's more, it was exactly what happened, and what's even more, Charlie Wilson and his friends surely believed exactly that.

What Aaron Sorkin cannot understand, because he knows about this only because the good guys won, is that anti-Communists didn't back resistance to the Soviet Union because we thought the resistance was a way to destroy the tyranny. Anti-Communists backed resistance because the Soviet evil had to be countered anywhere and everywhere it could be. Wilson's untiring efforts against the Soviet Empire weren't notable because they were practical. They were notable because this man, morally questionable in so many ways, understood the demands of the most profound moral question of his time. ♦

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"'The Tonight Show' has no deal with writers and therefore is a 'struck' show." **—The Washington Post, *January 3***

Jay Leno: As you know, we have a popular feature on our show called "Jay Walking," which has a very simple premise: I go out on the streets here, maybe to a shopping mall or something, and ask people who walk by if they can answer some questions, maybe about history or current events or movies or something. We have a lot of fun with this, don't we, Kevin?

Kevin Eubanks:

Jay Leno: Well, this afternoon we went to a little mall, just a tiny little shopping center right here in Burbank, and asked the people walking around what I thought were some pretty basic questions about our country's government. Can we roll that now? Wouldn't you agree they were pretty simple questions, Kevin?

Kevin Eubanks:

Jay Leno: And what's your name?

Unidentified girl: Jessica.

Jay Leno: Jessica, who…is the vice president…of the United States?

Jessica: Ummm….

Jay Leno: What is the name of the vice president?

Jessica: Oh, I know this.

Jay Leno: The number two man in the government. There's Bush, and then there's….

Jessica: Ummm, oh….

Jay Leno: It rhymes with "door."

Jessica: Oh, what is his name? This is driving me crazy.

Jay Leno: Some people say he's a *bore.* His wife's name is Tipper.

Jessica: Dick Cheney!

Jay Leno: Oh! I'm sorry, Jessica. The answer is Al Gore, the guy who just won the Pulitzer Peace Prize. All right, one more question? There are 12 justices on the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land. There's the chief justice of the United States, whose name is …

Jessica: Judge Judy?

Jay Leno: That's one. Judy Sheindlin. Very good! Can you name any of the others?

Jessica: Sleepy, Dopey …

Jay Leno: That's two more. Remember, there are 12 in all. There's a woman justice …

Jessica: Bashful? Let's see, there's Manny, Moe, Jack, Donner, Blitzen, Dasher, Prancer.

Jay Leno: Whoa! This girl is on fire, Kevin!

Kevin Eubanks:

Jay Leno: There's one more justice of the Supreme Court….the other justices don't like him as much….he has a red nose….

Jessica: Rudolph!

Jay Leno: Amazing! And who says our young people don't know anything? I say to all you skeptics, come to Burbank! Kevin, what do we have for this young lady?

Kevin Eubanks:

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